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Jordanians fear death is imminent

Hussein flies home after doctors fail

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN AMMAN

A DYING King Hussein was last night flying back to Jordan with the apparent intention that he should die on home soil after a second bone marrow transplant failed to gain remission of his cancer.

"The great fear of everyone here is that the King is rushing home to die among his people and not on foreign turf," a Jordanian former diplomat said. "We all know that is what he would always have wanted."

The move caught the Jordanian authorities by surprise as earlier it had been announced that the 63-year-old monarch would remain in isolation at the Mayo clinic, Minnesota, for two weeks to give the second operation time to take effect. Efforts had been made through the state-controlled press and television to convince jittery Jordanians, deeply apprehensive of life without the charismatic King who has ruled them for 47 turbulent years, that his morale was high.

Samir Farraj, the King's doctor, said that Hussein's condition on leaving the US was critical, leading many Jordanians to fear that he might not even survive the long plane journey. He very nearly died due to complications arising from a low blood count as he was being flown back unexpectedly to the US last month.

"His Majesty's condition has become critical due to the

failure of the functions of the internal organs," Lieutenant-General Farraj said. In 1992, the King had a kidney and ureter removed in a previous cancer operation.

Last night, a mood of near-panic gripped the strategic kingdom wedged between Israel and two Arab dictatorships. Only last month he returned in triumph to Amman after months of treatment at the Mayo clinic and immediately deposed his brother, Hassan, as Crown Prince and heir to the throne.

Western diplomats said that Jordanian forces had been placed on special alert in case of any attempt by neighbouring Syria or Iraq to try to take advantage of the crisis in the Hashemite kingdom to foment instability. Crown Prince Abdullah, who replaced Prince Hassan, is a major-general in command of the special forces but a political novice with little experience of diplomacy.

Shortly before the King's plane took off with doctors at his side, a senior government official said: "It is an extraordinary time for us, but things are running as smoothly as they can be, given the difficult situation. We have concerns, but we are not worried about the future of the country."

As with every aspect of the recent drama inside the court and the family intrigues that underlie it, Jordanians re-

ceived their first news of the King's journey home from foreign broadcasting stations and word of mouth. International telephone lines quickly became jammed.

It was only later that Jordanian television made a bland announcement, playing down the gravity of the situation by saying that the King would be flown by helicopter from the airport to the Hussein Medical Centre on the outskirts of Amman to receive further treatment.

Behind the scenes, preparations were being made for what could turn into the most significant and high-security funeral in the Middle East since President Sadat was buried in Cairo after his assassination there by Islamic extremists in 1981.

World broadcasting organisations were making frantic bids to block-book rooms in Amman's small number of top-class hotels.

In addition to leaders from around the world anxious to pay respects to the King and to show support for his successor, many members of foreign royal families are expected to attend. They include the Prince of Wales, who this week sent his congratulations to Crown Prince Abdullah.

"This has only confirmed that in January the King came home to do the business — to put his throne in what he be-



King Hussein waving to his people on returning to Jordan from the US last month

lieved was the safest pair of hands and to return it to his own line," a diplomat said.

The second homecoming this morning will contrast poignantly with the King's courageous return at the controls of his own jet just over two weeks ago when he informed his people that he had been cured of the lymphatic cancer that had kept him in the US for six months. Against medical advice, he drove 15 miles through the city in an open-top

car in lashing rain and shook hands with or embraced more than 2,000 of his subjects.

The Times has learnt that some of the King's doctors tried to prevent him from returning to Amman then and urged him to stay on longer in London. But he insisted. "He said that only the sight of his people on the streets would give the legitimacy he wanted to change back the succession," said one source.

In a bid to quell continuing

rumours of feuding at court, Prince Hassan yesterday chaired a session of the Jerusalem committee which he has always run. This was his first public duty since he was deposed and retired in a huff to his residence.

Officials denied an Israel television report that Prince Hassan had sought permission from the King to move with his family to England.

News censored, page 16

Surprise rate cut of 0.5% cheers City but hits savers

BY ALASDAIR MURRAY AND SUSAN EMMETT

SAVERS were dealt a savage blow yesterday with the fifth successive monthly cut in the Bank of England base rate from 6 per cent to 5.5 per cent. National Savings certificates returns hit a 40-year low.

The Bank's unexpected decision to trim base rates was greeted with widespread acclaim by the business and the unions, relieved that further action has been taken to tackle the rapidly slowing economy. Mortgage lending rates were cut to their lowest levels for 30 years.

Although none of the banks or building societies announced an immediate cut in their savings rates, saving returns are expected to drop by the end of the month. The average no-notice account now pays a meagre 2.13 per cent while 90-day accounts pay about 3.78 per cent, according to Moneyfacts, the financial data publication.

The Bank said it had taken the decision because of continuing concerns about the health of the global economy and signs that consumer demand and domestic inflation remain weak. Base rates have fallen from a peak of 7.5 per cent last autumn to their lowest level in four years.

There was relief in the Government because the cut closed the gap between UK and European interest rates and made the prospect of a "soft landing" for the economy more likely. The Prime Minister said the reduction should help the economy weather "what was always going to be a tougher situation for jobs and businesses".

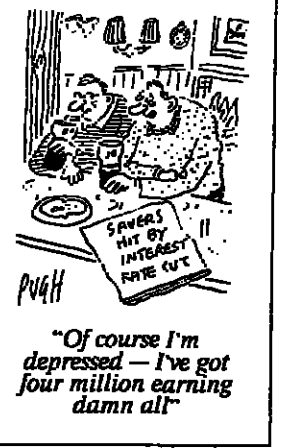
However, Francis Maude,

the Shadow Chancellor, said the Bank clearly thought the economy was "in a lot more trouble than Gordon Brown complacently predicts". Mr Maude said the savings ratio (the percentage of income saved) had gone down by almost a third since Labour came to office.

He accused the Government of embarking on a "vindictive attack on savers" just when a savings culture was beginning to take root. "As part of their policy to raise taxes without people realising they have been hit, Labour have chosen to hit people's pensions and savings. In doing so they have jeopardised the culture of sav-

National Savings, which holds £64 billion of savers' money, has indicated that its rates are going to fall even further.

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Old-aged peers

Life peers over the age of 75, such as Baroness Thatcher and Baron Callaghan of Cardiff, face expulsion from a reformed House of Lords. Ministers are examining proposals to allow about two-thirds of the existing 502 life peers to stay. Page 2

Rover threat

Longbridge, the huge Rover car plant in the West Midlands with 14,000 employees may be abandoned by its parent company, BMW, after a power struggle at the German headquarters. Page 27

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Failure of Diana trademark plea paves way for a people's pin-up

BY DOMINIC KENNEDY

AN ATTEMPT by the family and memorial fund of Diana, Princess of Wales, to turn her face into a trademark has been turned down by the Patent Office.

The ruling should make Diana's likeness as freely available as effigies of Marilyn Monroe, Elvis Presley and James Dean, the other 20th-century heroes who died tragically young.

The Patent Office ruling, following 16 months of intense negotiations, is a blow for celebrities hoping to stop opportunists exploiting their fame. If Diana's family and fund had succeeded, they would have won unprecedented and overwhelming power to control the way her image was used.

The Patent Office, which has never allowed a dead person's likeness to become a registered trademark, ruled that Diana is an historical figure rather than a commercial



brand. The attempt to turn the late Princess into a trademark was made by submitting 52 photographs of her to cover every age, mood, outfit and angle.

Enough pictures were pro-

vided to create a three-dimensional image of Diana, which would have helped to prevent the manufacture of unofficial dolls, sculptures and holograms.

The family's only chance of

stopping a free-for-all in souvenirs of the Princess now is to ask the High Court to take the unusual step of overruling the Patent Office decision. They must do so by March 3.

The only living people to

have registered their images as trademarks in Britain are the racing drivers Jacques Villeneuve and Damon Hill and footballer Eric Cantona. They succeeded because they were able to convince the Patent Office that they were already trading on their image in a commercial way.

Villeneuve submitted three photographs of his face with different expressions. Cantona sent one of his face and another of the back of his shirt reading "Cantona 7". Hill has only turned his eyes into a trademark, staring through the visor of his Formula 1 helmet. The Diana application was far more comprehensive.

The souvenir industry will react quickly to the ruling. So far, there have been no Diana posters in shops because publishers feared being sued by the litigious memorial fund. Now the late Princess, mother, cover girl and campaigner for the dispossessed can assume a new role: the People's Pin-Up.

RAC prangs members' £34,000 windfalls

BY JOANNA BALE

ABOUT 12,000 members of the Royal Automobile Club who had been banking on a £34,000 windfall from selling RAC Motoring Services to Cadant, the American conglomerate, had their payouts cancelled when the deal was called off yesterday.

Cadant pulled out of the £450 million sale when Kim Howells, the Competition and Consumer Affairs Minister, attached strings to the deal after a Monopolies and Mergers Commission investigation. The RAC immedi-

ately announced plans to float the company on the London Stock Exchange in the summer. It also said that some other potential trade and financial buyers had expressed an interest in a deal and that discussions would go on in parallel with flotation preparations.

The failed deal was a blow for the members, many of whom had spent their windfall. On being told of the news, Ronnie Fox, a senior partner in the London law firm Fox Williams, said: "Aargh! I've already spent the money on a little sports car. I bought the car thinking 'this will just tie up

nically with the money coming in.' It's a great shame, but let's hope that another buyer will come along soon."

Another member, an advertising executive, is known to have rekindled a teenage love affair with powerful motorcycles, while one QC fulfilled his desire for a Jaguar XJS.

The 12,000 members, who are entitled to use the RAC's luxurious headquarters in Pall Mall, central London, were on course for the windfall until Peter Mandelson, the former Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, referred the bid to the Monopolies and

Mergers Commission in September. Cadant pulled out yesterday after Kim Howells, the Competition and Consumer Affairs Minister, ruled that, in line with a Monopolies and Mergers Commission recommendation, Cadant would have to divest itself of Green Flag, the breakdown company, if the RAC takeover were to go ahead.

The RAC said: "We are very disappointed with the government decision. It is now up to the board to get the best deal for shareholders."

Flotation question, page 27



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Once more round the block without loss of marbles

As we age, the lure of the familiar grows. How comforting is the known! Books we've already read, resorts we've visited, old haunts, old chums... And old debates. Yesterday a doomed House of Lords shuddered at the abyss — and reached for a security blanket: an argument about the return of the Elgin Marbles.

The umpteenth debate, old classic and hoary perennial, this is one of their lordships' favourites. Like a Gilbert & Sullivan opera they know the lines. The pros and cons are settled, rehearsed and simple to understand. In a bewil-



MATTHEW PARRIS
POLITICAL SKETCH

dering world of micro-chips, techno hip-hop and Glenn Hoddle, this is something peers can really get their grizzled heads around.

They went at it eagerly. Lord Jenkins of Putney (in the half-remembered past an Arts Minister) put his question: "Will Her Majesty's Government respond favourably to the request for the return of the Parthenon Marbles to Athens?"

Calling them "the Parthenon Marbles" shows you are aware of Greek sensitivities. Wispy-bearded Lord Jenkins is one of those revolutionary hotheads who want to let the

Marbles go. According to the libretto of this opera he therefore joins the red troupe. The blue troupe is characterised by retired museum boffins and growling Tories of the "why-oh-why" school.

But Jenkins departed from the script, introducing a novelty stage-prop: a piece of paper — an invitation (he said) from Greece, to talks. Waving it he declared that he would now hand it to the minister. A ripple of surprise. Lord McIntosh of Haringey declined the invitation.

Then another novelty. Jenkins produced an opinion poll proving (he said) that a majority of the public support the return of the Marbles. Only three knew what the Marbles were.

Scene 2 next: the minister's reply. Causing a flutter of concern among the blue troupe.

McIntosh didn't say "Elgin Marbles" but "Parthenon Sculptures". Nothing to fear, however. Whatever they were, they weren't going back. It would be "a disaster" if galleries and museums had to return everything originating abroad. His lordship was too polite to spell it out: Britain would be left with some flint tools, crossbows and a couple of oil paintings of aristocrats with spaniels. Lord Windlesham, a museum boffin, seemed to agree.

Lord Strabolgi and Lady Saltoun of Abernethy joined the blue troupe. There's no

beating about the bush with Lady Saltoun: "My lords, we've saved them and we should keep them." For the red troupe, Lord Rea hailed a cut in Athens air-pollution.

As ever, the Liberal Democrats found the Third Way. A solemn Lord Falkland told peers that on the one hand it was "reasonable" for the Greeks to claim the Marbles back; on the other, we were right to feel it was "paramount" they be kept in the best place. "Consensus" must be sought, he warbled. Belgium?

One peer's reason for keeping the Marbles was that the

British Museum is so convenient. Even McIntosh felt this went too far: São Paulo's splendid museum, he said, contained much he could more easily see here: this was perhaps not an argument for airlifting its contents from Brazil to London.

In dealing with his peers, McIntosh gets dangerously close to feather-ruffling levels of scorn. Lord Mishcon asked whether he was in favour of the return of marbles generally. McIntosh snapped. "Depends who's lost them, my lords."

Shock waves rocked the chamber.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Sex abuse statistics 'too low'

Official figures greatly underestimate the prevalence of child sex abuse, a Home Office report said. In 1995 3,957 people in England and Wales were cautioned or convicted for sexual offences against children, but police reports suggest about 72,600 cases a year according to the report's author, Don Grubin, Professor of Forensic Psychiatry at Newcastle upon Tyne University.

In spite of parents' worries about "stranger danger", the report found that most victims knew their abuser. Eighty per cent of child sex offences took place in the home of the offender or the victim. A fifth of cases involving female adolescent offenders were linked to babysitting.

The report added that about a third of all sex crimes were committed by teenage boys and girls.

Illegal refugees

Some 20,000 asylum-seekers are on the run in Britain, the Government has disclosed. The Home Office Minister Lord Williams of Mostyn said last night that the figure, which was calculated by the Immigration and Nationality Directorate, included those who had breached immigration rules or were "out of contact" with officials.

Pinochet waits

The House of Lords reserved judgment, to a date to be decided, after a 12-day hearing into whether General Pinochet is immune from arrest and extradition to Spain over alleged human rights crimes. The latest hearing followed the Law Lords setting aside their previous decision to overturn a High Court ruling that the general has immunity.

Legal aid flaws

The criminal legal-aid budget has failed to win approval from government auditors for the seventh year running. The National Audit Office found aid being granted without sufficient proof of entitlement in 25 per cent of cases and errors by court officials in calculating claimants' contributions in 38 per cent of cases. The total budget is £600 million.

Tube strike on

London Underground staff will stage a 48-hour strike in a dispute over job security and employment conditions once private companies have taken control of track and signalling. The Rail, Maritime and Transport union will tell its 7,000 members not to report for duty between 6pm on Sunday, February 14, until 6pm on Tuesday, February 16.

Viewers bugged

Thousands of people called the Government's "millennium bug" hotline after seeing an item on daytime television that said the computer problem could bring "centuries without water or light". The feature, during Wednesday's *This Morning*, was dubbed "irresponsible and dangerous" by Action 2000, the campaign body and hotline organiser.

Life peers could be forced to quit at 75

By JAMES LANDALE, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

LIFE peers over the age of 75, such as Baron Callaghan of Cardiff and Baron Jenkins of Hillhead, face expulsion from a reformed House of Lords under plans for a mandatory retirement age.

Ministers are examining proposals to allow about two-thirds of the existing 502 life peers to stay on in a fully reformed second chamber. But they could impose a retirement age of 75 to exclude 148 life peers as there would not be enough room for them all.

A bar on the over-75s would prevent many distinguished members of "the great and the good" from playing a part in parliament. Those forced out would include Baron Attenborough, 75, the film director; Baron Weatherill, 78, the former Speaker, and Baron Healey, 81, the former Labour Chancellor. Baroness Jay of Paddington, 59, the Leader of the Lords would survive, but her father, Lord Callaghan, 86, the former Prime Minister, would not. Baroness Thatcher is 75 next year.

Other expelled peers would include Baroness Castle of Blackburn, 88, the former Labour Cabinet minister; Lord Jenkins, 78, the former Liberal Leader in the Lords; Baron Rix, 75, the former doyen of Whitehall farce; and Baron

Hailsham, of St Marylebone, 91, the former Lord Chancellor. At 100, Lord Denning, the former Master of the Rolls, would also face the chop. Voluntary retirement would also be encouraged by allowing life peers who give up their voting and speaking rights to retain their "club rights" to use the Lords' bars and restaurants.

The fixed retirement age could prompt charges of ageism against the Government which before Christmas launched a fresh drive against age discrimination in the workplace with a voluntary code.

The option to allow 354 existing life peers under the age of 75 to remain in the Lords provides a fresh signal of the growing support within the Government for having a largely appointed second chamber. Other members would probably be chosen by indirect or direct election.

Next week, the Government will appoint a Royal Commission — chaired by Lord Wakeham, the former Tory Cabinet minister — to bring forward second-stage proposals within a year for a fully reformed second chamber. A first-stage Bill to expel hereditary peers received its second reading in the Commons this week.

Ministers believe that retaining some of the life peers would give the new chamber an element of continuity. The peers would provide a wealth of experience and save the Government the enormous task of having to appoint a huge swathe of new members.

The proposal would also make it easier to find people willing to accept a life peerage during the transitional House of Lords. If life peers were not to be kept on for the fully reformed chamber, many potential nominees would balk at being appointed for just a few years. A spokesman for Lady Jay said: "These are all ideas that the Royal Commission would have to consider."



Thatcher: the lady will be turning 75 next year



TWO lorries lie on their sides on the A1 at Boroughbridge in North Yorkshire after being blown over as severe gales wreaked havoc across northern Britain yesterday. Fourteen lorries toppled over on one stretch of the A1 at Scotch Corner in North Yorkshire as gusts reached 90mph. Police warned drivers of high-sided vehicles not to use the A1 or M62.

Forecasters predicted little respite today. The PA WeatherCentre said: "The extremely windy weather will be

Gales batter North

around until lunchtime, and even after that there will be strong gusts."

Six thousand homes were without electricity in north Scotland. Scottish Hydro Electric said severe gale-force winds brought disruption throughout its area, with Shetland, Wick and Dingwall worst affected. Efforts to restore supplies were hit by disruption to air

and ferry services, and helicopters were being placed on standby, the company said.

A Panamanian-registered cargo ship ran aground off Orkney after dragging her anchor in the early hours. Kirkwall lifeboat and a coastguard helicopter were alerted, and stood by to rescue the *Baltic Champ's*

seven-man crew. The 1,660-ton ship later managed to free herself on a rising tide and was escorted by lifeboat to Kirkwall harbour.

In England, hoardings on buildings in Sheffield city centre were blown off and a shopping trolley swept up by the wind slightly injured an 80-year-old woman in Barnsley. Another South Yorkshire pensioner was swept off her feet by the gusts, police said.

Forecast, page 26

Farmers' fury over extended beef ban

By MICHAEL HORNSBY, AGRICULTURE CORRESPONDENT

FARMERS and butchers rounded on Nick Brown, the Agriculture Minister, yesterday for refusing to end the 14-month ban on beef on the bone.

Mr Brown, who had been hinting since before Christmas that cuts such as T-bone steaks would be soon be back on sale, told the Commons that the ban would stay for at least six more months.

Opposition MPs accused the Government of being inconsistent and of ignoring independent advice on some food safety issues while heeding it on others.

Mr Brown said he had been advised by the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Professor Liam Donaldson, that there

was still a small, though reduced risk of becoming infected with the human form of "mad cow" disease from eating bone-in beef. In his advice, released yesterday, Professor Donaldson voices concern that a few cattle infected with BSE by their mothers might still be entering the food chain.

"I know that this will be a great disappointment to many in the food and farming industries and to many would-be consumers," Mr Brown told MPs. "But the need to protect public health and retain confidence in beef and beef products remains the Government's paramount concern."

"It is encouraging that the CMO sees grounds for hoping the situation will improve and,

PILL IS MORE OF A RISK THAN A T-BONE

Meat lovers who ignore the beef-on-the-bone ban have more chance of dying from taking the Pill or being struck by lightning. The Department of Health's calculations put the risk of dying from eating a T-bone steak at about one in two billion. Ian Langford, a senior research fellow in risk perception at the University of East Anglia, said: "There is no such thing as no risk, but one in two billion is close to zero. To put it in context, if the risk is less than one in a billion you are more than 100 times more likely to be killed by lightning and 10,000 times more likely to be murdered." The Chief Medical Officer has argued, however, that too little is known about "mad cow" disease to make valid comparisons.

If we can, consistent with a further assessment of the medical and scientific evidence, we will lift the ban after the review recommended by the CMO for six months time."

Ben Gill, president of the National Farmers' Union, said the decision to keep the ban defied common sense and was out of all proportion to any risk involved. "All the scientific evidence which has been published so far has conclud-

ed that any risk from eating beef on the bone is absolutely minuscule," he said.

Roger Kelsey, of the National Federation of Meat and Food Traders, representing 3,000 independent butchers, said: "It is a complete nonsense. Mr Brown said he wanted to let the consumer decide. Now he has done a U-turn."

Although beef on the bone accounted for only 5 per cent of all beef sales before the ban, Mr Kelsey estimated that specialist butchers had lost up to 15 per cent of their business.

The Consumers' Association called for more consistency on food safety policy, but said that, in the light of the CMO's advice, it was "satisfied that on this occasion the Government has quite rightly placed public health first".

Academics raise pay ceiling

ACADEMICS in Britain have broken the £200,000 pay barrier, according to a survey in today's edition of *The Times Higher Education Supplement*.

The annual study, which monitors the salaries of heads of higher education institutions, shows the directorship of the London Business School to be the plum job in the university system.

The three men who held the post in turn during 1997-98, when Professor George Bain moved to Queen's University, Belfast, earned £207,000.

However, the top earner was an another member of staff at LBS, who was paid £220,000.

The school refused to divulge his name last night, but said that the salary included a performance bonus and payments for teaching executive programmes. Professor Bain took a pay cut of almost

Higher education salaries top £200,000, says John O'Leary

£70,000 to move to Belfast but still earned the sixth-highest salary. His successors in the LBS directorship were Michael Earl and John Quelch.

Other university vice-chancellors have considerable ground to make up, despite average pay rises of 4.8 per cent last year.

David VandeLinde, of Bath University, is second on the *THES* list after an 8.9 per cent rise brought his salary to £147,000. He has since taken a £7,000 pay cut in return for more holidays.

Both Oxford and Cambridge are well down the list. Sir Alec Broers, at Cam-

bridge, shared 41st place with Professor Frank Gould, of East London University, on £117,000, while Dr Colin Lucas, at Oxford, was 115th on £87,404.

A handful of vice-chancellors saw their pay reduced during 1997-98. Mike Fitzgerald, the former Vice-Chancellor of Thames Valley University took the biggest cut, of 4.3 per cent, bringing his salary to £89,000. He has since resigned after a damning report on the university by the Quality Assurance Agency.

The Association of University Teachers said that the vice-chancellors owed their record-breaking salaries to the efforts of lowly-paid lecturers.

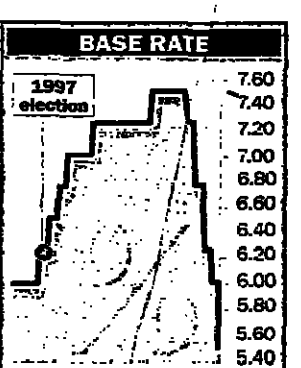
Paul Cottrell, the assistant general secretary, said: "We wait to hear of a vice-chancellor who refuses to take a bigger pay rise than his staff. We suspect it will be a long wait."

Fifth rate cut worries savers

Continued from page 1
ther. A spokesman said: "We will be looking at the short-term and medium-term rates on the money markets and we will have to set out rates accordingly."

National Savings slashed rates five times last year and recently reduced all its rates by between 0.25 per cent and 0.5 per cent. Returns for National Savings certificates have hit a 40-year low with the launch of the 49th issue which now pays 3.25 per cent.

Pensioners, who rely on the safety of deposit accounts for a steady income, will be the most affected by the rate cuts. Harold Becker, a 77-year-old



pensioner from Twickenham, London, is worried that his standard of living will be af-

fected. Mr Becker said: "Old-age pensioners like me who rely on the income from their savings feel pretty lousy when rates drop every month."

Major mortgage lenders quickly followed the Bank's lead reducing their standard variable rates by as much as 0.5 percentage points. The Halifax and Nationwide claimed that their new rates were the lowest on offer since 1966. Halifax cut its standard variable rate by 0.5 percentage points to 6.95 per cent while Nationwide reduced its lending rate by a similar amount to 6.54.

Other lenders, however, cut their rates by smaller amounts taking advantage of the latest

cut in base rates to try and improve their profit margins. The Abbey National said it was only reducing its rate by 0.4 percentage points to 7 per cent while Cheltenham & Gloucester reduced its rates by 0.46 percentage points to 6.99 per cent.

Kate Barker, chief economist at the Confederation of British Industry, welcomed the "decisive move" but said that "rates can and should be further reduced to 5 per cent over the next couple of months". Union leaders offered the Bank their seal of approval although they pleaded for action to help revive the manufacturing sector.

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CUSTOMERS FRUSTRATED:
 Customs sink SBS
 raid on drug boat
 Barding party
 commandos in
 CUSTOMERS FRUSTRATED:
 IRA man fr
 secret agents

JUSTICE FRUSTRATED: smuggling case collapses as judge condemns investigators for disregarding law

Customs sink SBS raid on drug boat

BY SIMON DE BRUXELLES

IT WAS one of the most dramatic drug seizures made on the high seas by British Customs officers.

Heavily armed commandos from the elite Special Boat Squadron led the raid on the 52ft Maltese-registered motor vessel *Simon de Danser*, 100 miles off the Portuguese coast — the culmination of a 12-month international surveillance operation.

On board they found 4,128 kilograms of cannabis resin with a street value of £14.5 million — as well as a Special Boat Squadron colleague — the customs officer, who was arrested and accused of helping to organise the shipment. A second SBS man was arrested later.

At Bristol Crown Court yesterday, however, the case against the ten alleged smugglers, collapsed in disarray. It was thrown out by a judge who described the Customs investigation that led to their arrests as "a catalogue of flawed proceedings, illegalities and incompetence".

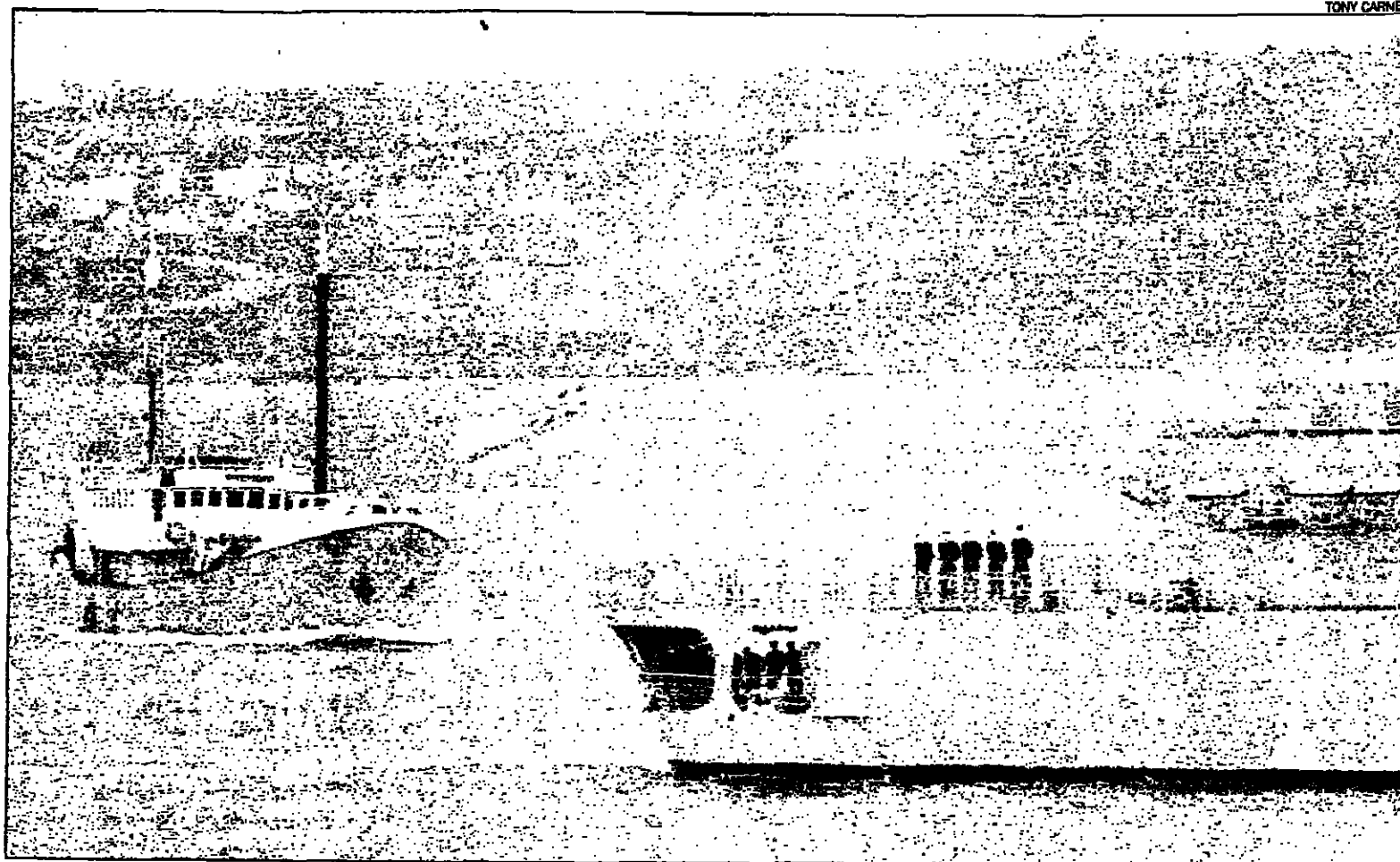
The trial, which had been expected to last six months,

ended without a jury being sworn in. After hearing almost three weeks of legal argument, Judge John Foley ruled that there had been overwhelming abuse of due process.

He said: "This case has revealed a culture and climate of carelessness, recklessness and disregard for the rules, procedures and conventions of Maltese law, British law and international law." He criticised the "destruction" of potentially important evidence such as the ship's navigational charts, which were subjected to forensic examination before being formally photographed. He also said that senior Customs investigators were "unconvincing" witnesses.

Within hours of the judge's ruling the Crown Prosecution Service announced that it was dropping extradition proceedings against Brian Charrington, 40, a former car dealer, who lives in Spain. He was accused of being the financier of the shipment of cannabis from Morocco to Britain.

His elder brother David, a former powerboat racing champion from Powderham, Devon, was among those dis-



The *Simon de Danser*, which was boarded by commandos 100 miles off Portugal, being escorted into Plymouth by a Royal Navy warship

charged yesterday. The court had been told that the *Simon de Danser* had been shadowed across the Mediterranean from Malta by Customs investigators. After a stopover in Madeira, the ship and its illegal cargo headed north. On May 5, 1997, Operation Darden culminated in the interception of the vessel in international waters by HMS York, a Royal Navy warship.

The vessel and its cargo were escorted to the Royal Navy dockyard at Devonport. The seven men on board, and three others arrested in Britain, were charged with con-

spiracy to smuggle Moroccan cannabis resin into Britain.

British officials had been given permission to seize the vessel by Lino Vassalli, director of the Maltese Maritime Authority. In fact, the only person with authority to grant official approval was Borg Berthet, the Attorney-General of Malta, the court was told.

Lawrence Montalto, a Customs officer, said that he had contacted the Attorney-General's office but there was no record of him making such a telephone call.

Judge Foley said: "I did not find Mr Montalto a credible

witness. I think it is likely he was being untruthful."

The British told the Maltese authorities that the vessel would be seized "off the coast of the UK" and misled them into believing it was in international waters when it was still berthed in Madeira. The judge said that the boarding happened 900 miles from Britain.

There was also uncertainty over the vessel's destination. The judge said that David Raynes, assistant chief investigation officer for the Customs in the West Country and Wales, was going "on a hunch" rather than firm evidence

when he decided it was heading for Britain. The judge, who described Mr Raynes and Mr Vassalli as unconvincing witnesses, said there was some evidence that the ship was bound for The Netherlands, which would have made the boarding illegal.

Alun Jenkins, QC, for the Crown, said that, if there had been a "procedural" mistake, it was an innocent one and should not make the seizure unlawful.

The Customs and Excise National Investigation Service and the National Crime Squad, which conducted the

joint investigation, said that the collapse of the trial was regrettable and disappointing. "Such cases are always complex. This case presented added dimensions and difficulties."

"The investigation culminated in the interdiction of the vessel 100 miles off Portugal. In excess of four tonnes of cannabis with a value of just under £14.5 million was seized and thus prevented from reaching the illicit drugs market."

"All the agencies involved will consider the details of the judge's remarks to see what procedural lessons can be learned for the future."

Wealthy fugitive escapes second hearing

BY STEWART TENDLER
CRIME CORRESPONDENT

BRIAN CHARRINGTON, the sometime garage owner and police informant accused of being one of Britain's biggest drug dealers, has escaped trial for the second time. Within hours of the collapse of the *Simon de Danser* case, the CPS announced that it was abandoning extradition proceedings against him.

Arrested in 1997 after his brother and the SBS men were held, Mr Charrington, 41, has been free since August when a Spanish court released him on bail of £200,000.

Once a garage owner and second-hand car dealer in Middlesbrough, Mr Charrington was first arrested in 1992 as he stepped off his private aircraft. He was accused of a conspiracy involving 1,400kg of cocaine worth more than £150 million. Customs officers allegedly found £2 million in cash at his home, some of it allegedly bearing traces of drugs.

Customs also seized a £15 million consignment of cocaine after bugging his home. During the investigation a further 900kg of the drug was allegedly discovered inside ingots of metal.

But Mr Charrington, who was one of 10 people charged, never stood trial. The case was dropped after his claim that he had been working as a police informer was backed by Cleveland detectives. It was said that his arrest had ruined a chance to stop Colombian cocaine entering Europe.

Mr Charrington's release prompted questions in the Commons. A four-year investigation into allegations of corruption against two experienced Cleveland officers ended without prosecution.

Mr Charrington moved to Spain and was reported three years ago to be under investigation by the French police in connection to a cargo of cannabis found on a yacht. He was never charged.

At his villa in Calpe, Mr Charrington has a private helicopter, luxury cars and weapons. But he has not forgotten his informing days — he has launched an action against police for £1 million that he claims is still owed.

Boarding party found commandos in crew

BY SIMON DE BRUXELLES

WHEN members of the Special Boat Squadron raided the *Simon de Danser* in mid-Atlantic, they would have recognised some of those who were already aboard.

The 274-tonne vessel's crew included one serving SBS man, Nigel Spencer, and two who had recently left the squadron, Peter Mercer and the skipper, Charles Thomas.

A second SBS man, Mark

Jones, was arrested in England after the raid. Both Mr Jones and Mr Spencer have since left the service.

The reunion on board the drug ship would not have been a warm one. The SBS, which recruits exclusively from the Royal Marines, is proud of its elite reputation as a sea-going version of the SAS.

Unlike their army counter-

parts, members have so far largely resisted the temptation to brag in print about their achievements. Major General Robert Fulton, Commandant-General of the Royal Marines, said that the regiment was "very proud of our hard-earned reputation, professionalism and self-discipline."

"We were extremely disappointed to hear in May 1997 that two serving officers had



Walking free from court yesterday, left to right: Charles Thomas, Nigel Spencer, Peter Mercer and Mark Jones

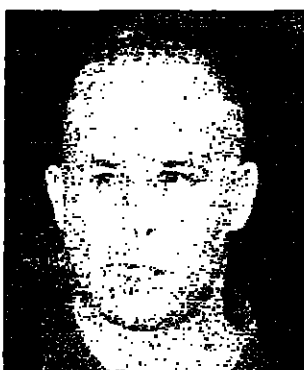
been arrested and this disappointment was greatly magnified by the nature of the alleged offences.

"The Royal Marines have a total antipathy towards any-



thing to do with drugs and no sympathy for anyone involved in such business."

The acquitted defendants were David Malcolm Charrington, 45, of Powderham,



Devon; Timothy Paul Spink, 33, of Torquay, Devon; Charles John Thomas, 37, of Poole, Dorset; Nigel Spencer, 28, of Poole; Peter David Mercer, 28, of Clevedon, North



Somerset; Mark William Jones, 33, of Paignton, Devon; and Anthony Dallara, 34, Martin John Wallsden, 42, and Alain Coelher, 38, who all live in Spain.

JUSTICE FRUSTRATED: trial flawed, say judges

IRA man free because secret agents broke law

BY SUSIE STEINER AND MICHAEL EVANS

THE last Northern Ireland republican prisoner held in an English jail was freed yesterday after the Court of Appeal ruled that intelligence officers had broken the law in bringing him to trial for a mainland bombing campaign.

Nicholas Mullen, who was jailed for 30 years for conspiracy to cause explosions, did not dispute the evidence connecting him to a heavy bombing campaign planned by the IRA in 1989 against the House of Commons, individual politicians and judges.

But his conviction was quashed by the Court of Appeal after it emerged that intelligence officers had brought him to England for trial through deportation rather than the correct and lengthy

process of extradition. The judges ruled that the British authorities had shown "a blatant and extremely serious failure to adhere to the rule of law" in conspiring with Zimbabwe, where Mr Mullen was staying, to deport him.

The prisoner, who has served nearly ten years in Frankland prison, Co Durham, emerged yesterday hugging his 17-year-old daughter Jessica and saying: "I'm glad to be coming out of the front door rather than the back door. I have been wronged."

Mr Mullen was convicted in 1990 for his role as an IRA "fixer" who supplied premises, cars, false birth certificates and banking facilities to an ac-

tive terrorist cell that was planning to bomb London.

His trial jury heard that, on December 20, 1988, Mr Mullen fled to Zimbabwe with his girlfriend, Jenny Payne, and Jessica, then seven. The next day police raided a South London flat rented by him and found ammunition, Semtex and incendiary devices.

Lord Justice Rose, sitting with Mr Justice Colman and Mr Justice Maurice Kay, quashed Mr Mullen's conviction. "For a conviction to be safe it must be lawful," they said. "And if it results from a trial which should never have taken place it can hardly be regarded as safe." Lord Justice Rose said: "The conduct of the

security services and police in procuring the unlawful deportation of the appellant represents, in the view of this court, a blatant and extremely serious failure to adhere to the rule of law."

The court was told that British secret intelligence service (SIS) officers furnished the Zimbabwean authorities with sufficient detail about Mr Mullen to warrant deportation. This was done "with a constant eye on any subsequent legal proceedings in London". An SIS officer told the Zimbabwe authorities that Britain wished to avoid "becoming involved in complicated extradition proceedings" but that, at the same time, Britain must not appear to be demanding deportation. SIS of-



Nicholas Mullen greets his supporters as he and his daughter Jessica leave the Court of Appeal yesterday

ficers ensured that Mr Mullen was denied access to a lawyer, to avoid the risk that Zimbabwean authorities "would be pressured into deporting him elsewhere."

The court heard that the deportation was stage-managed by SIS officers who stated: "The ideal would be for Mullen to be arrested shortly before the departure of a direct flight and put aboard it. A stage manager's skills would be essential here..."

Information about the SIS actions came to light six months ago after Mr Mullen's lawyers demanded full disclosure from the prosecution in preparation for their appeal.

Foreign Office sources said last night that in 1990, when Mr Mullen was convicted, disclosure rules did not entitle the defence to see any papers relating to the intelligence services. So the role of M16 in bringing Mr Mullen back to Britain was never disclosed in court. Mr Mullen's freedom yesterday immediately focused attention on which Conservative government minister had approved the illegal actions of M16 between 1988 and 1989.

Douglas Hurd, Home Secretary at the time, was unavailable for comment last night.

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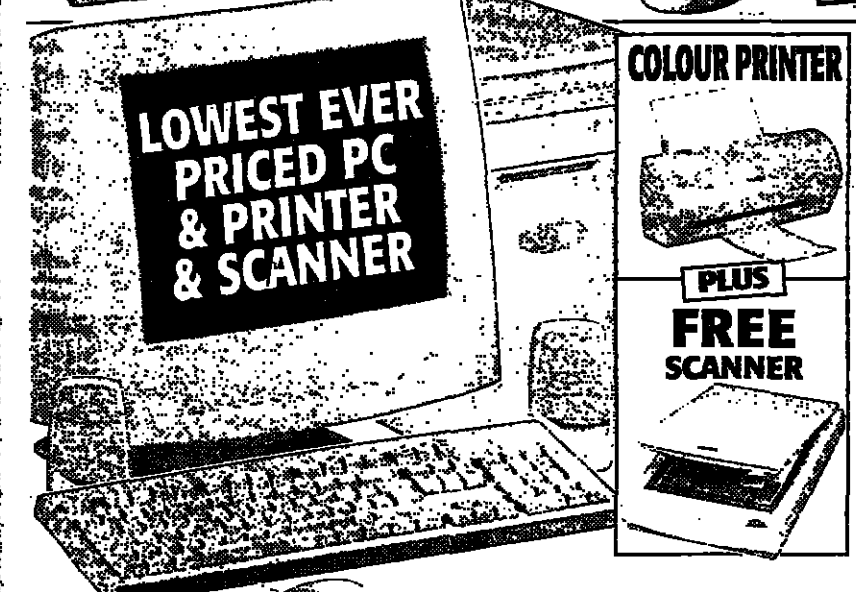
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Islanders
£700.000
will woo

The weather can dampen romance

Nursery babies beat allergies

Islanders hope £700,000 grant will woo wives

REMOTE Hebridean island communities — "bachelor country" to the locals — are to receive European funding to attract potential wives.

The grant of £711,000 will be spent on creating jobs that appeal to women so that they will be encouraged to settle on the islands. Women have been steadily abandoning the area that stretches from the tip of North Uist to the tail of Benbecula: there are 1,386 of them to 2,064 men.

Colin Campbell, an unmarried, retired army major who lives on Benbecula, admits that the lifestyle discourages many women. He has to hike across a boggy moor to reach his remote farmhouse, transport shopping half a mile by wheelbarrow, and grapple with an outdoor shower once blown away in a gale. "Only a brave girl would come here," he said.

It is hoped that the grant, from the European LIFE programme, will alleviate the plight of the terminally single. A spokeswoman for the agency that will distribute the money, said: "The number of women who leave the islands has become a very important demographic issue. A large part of our objective is to increase employment opportunities and create scope for women to find work on the islands."

One of the scheme's priorities is to preserve the traditional Hebridean way of life: crofting and fishing, which employ the bulk of unmarried men, could die out if there are no young people to take over.

The islands, with their inhospitable climate, lack of amenities and limited social life, have always found it hard to hold on to women. The majority of female school leavers attend college or university on the mainland and many never go back.

One woman who returned to North Uist after four years at Glasgow University said: "After being away you realise how hard life is here. There are hardly any shops, no cine-

European cash will create jobs

to attract women

back to Outer

Hebrides, writes

Gillian Harris

ma and nothing much to do. You have to get back into an island mind-set, accepting what it's like, and lots of women are not willing to do that."

Now there is a feeling that the issue must be addressed. Isabel MacDonald, the area manager of Western Isles Enterprise, said: "Young women leaving has had an impact on the islands. There are great traces of land populated by bachelors. Quite a few took over their crofts from their parents and have never married."

Tracking down the bachelors is not easy. They are a shy and elusive breed with a pathological fear of being photographed. Years of living alone have taken their toll and many look horrified at the prospect of women invading their territory.

According to Uisdean Robertson, 47, who works for Western Isles Council, bachelors like himself are not looking for wives. "We've never been particularly bothered by it and I've certainly never heard anyone complain about it. In my era there was not much going on socially on the island so we just stayed at home reading or watching television. Anyway, having so many single men keeps the divorce rate down. Men don't miss having women around. Myself, I'd rather have a bar of chocolate."

However, Mr Campbell, 64, who went to Benbecula in 1972, believes there is an underlying sense of loss. "There is not a bachelor I know, including myself, who would say he deliberately wants to be a bachelor. Most of them would very

much like to be married but they have not met anyone."

Mr Campbell, a councillor who runs a croft and fishes for shellfish, believes there is a macho side to island life that puts women off. "It's a bit like the Wild West in some respects," he said. "Men gather in the pub for a few drams and to chat among themselves. But there will be no women in the pub at all."

"Hotel bars are the only meeting place, or the churches. Although I understand there are more social functions being held nowadays, so that might help."

It remains to be seen whether an influx of women will be welcome. Mr Campbell said: "Men on the islands are proud of their traditions. They don't always take to new things."

Leading article, page 23



Colin Campbell, with his dog, Jess, has lived on Benbecula since 1972. He says most of the bachelors, including himself, would like to be married

The weather can dampen romance

THE Outer Hebrides is one of the wettest places in Britain, with an average annual rainfall of 1,171 millimetres, and one of the windiest.

The best that can be said about the climate is that it is mild. Snow and ice rarely affect the islands, which are warmed by the Gulf Stream.

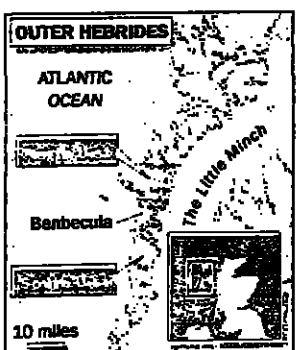
Women contemplating a move to the islands should bear in mind that the weather can play havoc with transport. The daily air service to Glasgow is frequently disrupted during the winter, and in

stormy weather the ferry remains in port. Venues for romantic dates are limited. The nearest cinema is more than 100 miles away in Inverness. Getting there involves driving to North Uist, catching a ferry to Harris, another drive to Stornoway, a four-hour ferry journey to Ullapool and then an hour's drive to Inverness.

The Uists have shops that sell food, newspapers and household goods, but any shoppers in search of high street names such as Jigsaw, Body Shop and French Connection have to catch a plane to Glasgow, at a cost of more than £200 return.

There is a handful of hairdressers on the islands, but the nearest salon is in Inverness, which is also the location of the nearest department store selling beauty products.

The islands have a limited number of bars and restaurants, serving Hebridean food, including shellfish, salmon and game. Most are closed on Sundays, however.



Nursery babies beat allergies

By IAN MURRAY, MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

BABIES from small families who are sent to day nurseries before they are a year old are far less likely to develop allergies in later life, researchers have discovered.

The study of nearly 2,500 children also found that those from families with four children or more were not as susceptible to allergies as they grew older.

The number of children who develop allergies has increased in recent years and one suspected reason is a decline in exposure to infections in early life.

The study, reported in *The Lancet* today, was carried out in three towns in eastern Germany between September 1992 and August 1993. The children were divided into three age groups — five to seven, eight to ten

and 11 to 14. The parents were asked at what age they sent their children to nursery and also questioned about whether they smoked, used coal fires or gas and whether their homes were damp, situated on noisy streets or had fitted carpets.

The researchers, from Heinrich Heine University at Düsseldorf, then carried out tests to discover if the children were allergic to a range of irritants from grass to cat fur.

Among children from small families, the proportion of allergy-related conditions was found to increase in direct relation to the age the child went to a nursery. The older the child was when first sent to the nursery, the more likely it was to be allergic.



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The end is nigh for a chance of peace

The problem is clear: the solution is not, reports Martin Fletcher

IT IS rare that Northern Ireland's security chiefs and republican leaders agree, but both say that Gerry Adams cannot deliver IRA disarmament, and if he tried he would split that lethal organisation. Instead of tiny splinter groups such as the Real and Continuity IRAs, the Province would suddenly face any number of well-armed, out-of-control republicans bent on resuming the armed struggle. Unionists and Dublin do not often concur either, but David Trimble, Northern Ireland's First Minister, has convinced Bertie Ahern's Government of another stark fact. If he admits Sinn Féin to a new executive without first achieving IRA disarmament he will be ousted as the Ulster Unionist Party's leader and the Good Friday accord will be finished. The peace process is now facing its ultimate test. There are

just weeks left to resolve the impossible issue of decommissioning which has for five years been kicked down the road by dint of fudge and ambiguity. That road has finally run out, and nobody in London, Dublin or Belfast has any idea what to do. This political vacuum has been filled, as it always is in Northern Ireland, by an upsurge in violence. The IRA and its loyalist counterparts have engaged in a state of brutal "punishment attacks" to keep control of their communities. Last week Eamon Collins, the IRA defector, was stabbed and bludgeoned to death by former colleagues. On Sunday Paddy Fox, an IRA dissenter, was abducted and beaten. A loyalist splinter group called the Red Hand Defenders has mounted bomb attacks on half a dozen Roman Catholic homes in the past fortnight.



Graffiti on a wall in republican Andersontown, Belfast, reflects staunch opposition to decommissioning. Sinn Féin insists it is unnecessary anyway

On Wednesday night the Ulster Volunteer Force claimed to have imported a fresh consignment of weapons including an anti-tank gun.

The resurgence of punishment attacks has greatly complicated efforts to break the decommissioning deadlock. Unionists and Conservatives have seized on them as evidence that republicans remain wedded to violence and are more adamant than ever that the republican movement

prove its conversion to exclusively democratic means by disarming. The attacks have thus made compromise by Mr Trimble still more impossible.

They have also shredded Westminster's valuable bipartisan consensus on Northern Ireland, the Tories demanding that all prisoner releases be halted.

The climactic act of the peace process begins on February 15 when the Assembly approves the structure of the 12-member executive. The Government hopes to transfer power to the executive on March 10 but without IRA disarmament Mr Trimble will instead order a government review of Sinn Féin's compliance with the accord's insistence on "exclusive peaceful and democratic means" and "opposition to any use or threat of force".

If the executive is not formed by May 22 Ireland's referendum vote to abolish its constitutional claim to Northern Ire-

land lapses. By early summer the Province would be plunged into a new marching season when inflamed sectarian tensions render political progress impossible. At some point the IRA's hardmen would give up on politics.

Mr Adams and Mr Trimble have led their respective followers as far as they can towards the centre ground but even after 17 months of direct contact the fundamental problems remain the inability to under-

stand each other, and not just a lack of trust but a presumption of bad faith.

Mr Trimble's camp insists he has done everything required of him by the accord. He has accepted prisoner releases, cross-border bodies, commissions on policing and equality and the principle of Sinn Féin in government.

Sinn Féin leaders insist that actual decommissioning is impossible and the accord does not demand it. They say the IRA considers it a demand for surrender and an attempt to "criminalise" republicans by implying they alone were responsible for 30 years of horror. They believe that if the accord is implemented, decommissioning will eventually become either possible or irrelevant and they cannot believe the process will collapse over the difference between guns being destroyed or lying silent. Everyone insists the process has come far too far to fail now, but nobody can see how to save it.

Leading article and Letters, page 23

IRA says it will recover all stolen weapons

By Martin Fletcher
Chief Ireland Correspondent

THE IRA pledged yesterday to continue its search for weapons stolen by defectors until it had recovered them all.

In a statement it said that a "small amount of weaponry" had been "secretly misappropriated" by those who had left to form the Real IRA in late 1997. These defectors included its Quartermaster General, the man in charge of the IRA's arsenal, and several members of its "engineering" or bomb-making department.

The IRA said it had recovered "some but not all of the stolen weapons" and would carry on. It also claimed that some of the defectors had visited the homes of IRA supporters "in an attempt to derail our investigations". Stealing weapons is an offence punishable by death under IRA rules.

Some republican sources suggested that it was IRA members taking part in the hunt who abducted Paddy Fox, a prominent dissident, on Sunday. Fox, a convicted bomber who opposes Sinn Féin's peace strategy, told Channel 4 last night that he was beaten unconscious and woke up several hours later in a forest.

Ken Maginnis, the Ulster Unionist Party's security spokesman, suggested that the IRA was trying to distance itself from attacks carried out with known IRA weapons.

Mo Mowlam, the Northern Ireland Secretary, and Andrew Mackay, her Tory shadow, both said that the IRA statement reinforced the case for the decommissioning of all paramilitary weapons. In her search for an end to the deadlock, Dr Mowlam has had meetings this week with Tony Blair and Bertie Ahern, the Irish Prime Minister. She will also meet all the Province's parties over the coming days.

Charges fell for lack of evidence

By Audrey Magee, Ireland Correspondent

MURDER charges against four men who killed an Irish policeman in an IRA raid on a post office van were dropped because of insufficient evidence, a court in Dublin was told yesterday.

The state made the admission after public outrage in Ireland that the four, who include the Brixton prison escapee Pearce McCauley, had admitted a lesser charge of manslaughter. Edward Comyn, for the prosecution, said the state could not prove that the men intended to kill Detective Jerry McCabe during the raid in Adare, Co Limerick, in June 1996. McCauley said through his barrister yesterday that he "deeply regretted" the officer's death.

The decision to drop murder charges led to accusations from Opposition politicians that the Government was pandering to the IRA to ensure the continuation of the peace process. However, Bertie Ahern, the Prime Minister, said that the judiciary was acting independently and that the men would not be granted early release under the terms

of the Good Friday agreement.

Legal sources said one of the reasons the case fell apart was because witnesses were scared to give evidence against McCauley, 34, from Strabane, Co Tyrone, and Jeremiah Sheehy, 36, Michael O'Neill, 46, and Kevin Walsh, 42, from Co Limerick. Patrick Harly, a farmer, refused to testify and was jailed for contempt for 18 months. Two other witnesses also backed out.

Mr Comyn said that it had not been possible to determine which of the gang killed Mr McCabe, although police believe it was not McCauley. McCauley still faces possible extradition to England on charges of conspiracy to murder, possession of firearms and conspiracy to cause explosions. He escaped from Brixton prison in July 1991.

He was arrested in Dublin in April 1993 and jailed for seven years for having a gun and ammunition. He was freed in November 1995 as part of the early release scheme after the first IRA ceasefire, but was re-arrested as he left jail.

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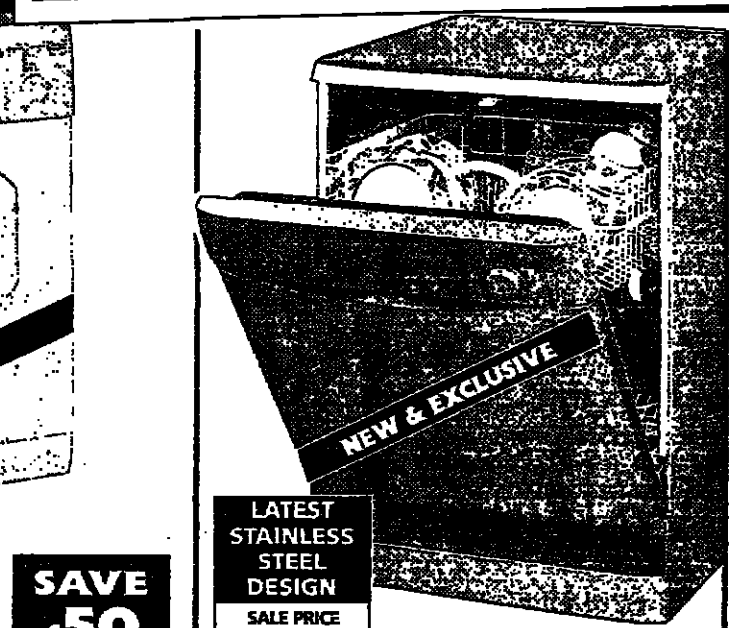
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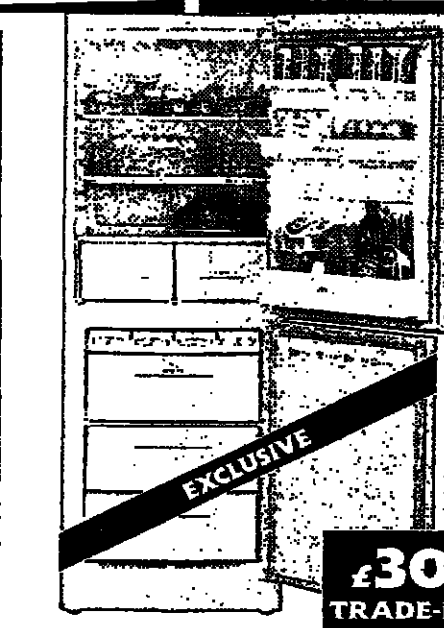
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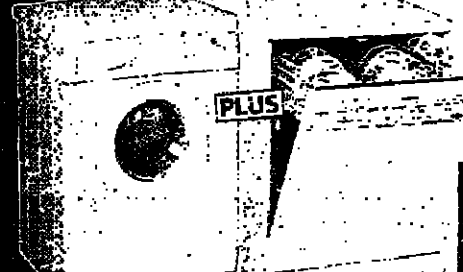
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An artist's impressions of the rejuvenated garden, which will feature fountains, waterfalls and canals, a grass labyrinth and hedges of rosebushes

Duchess makes Internet appeal for £15m garden

Paul Wilkinson on plan to transform Alnwick Castle

THE Duchess of Northumberland is seeking £15 million in sponsorship to help create one of the most spectacular gardens in the world.

The Percy family plans to transform a derelict 12-acre walled garden in the grounds of its ancestral home at Alnwick Castle, in Northumberland. The duchess said yesterday that the proposed cost of the project, which has tripled in the 18 months since the idea germinated, was justified.

"The initial concept of the garden has totally changed. It has snowballed into a vast public project," she said. "We have given 40 acres of previously private ground and have committed £3 million. We have spent £750,000 reaching this point, and we are now ready to look for sponsorship."

"We cannot take one penny from this garden, but we will have had a unique opportunity of creating a garden which we hope will be one of the greatest in the world."

The garden is being created by the Belgian father-and-son partnership of Jacques and Peter Wirtz, which designed the £25 million redevelopment of grounds at the Tuileries, the former royal palace in Paris. Paul Robbrecht will design a pavilion that will include a function room, shop and restaurant.

Up to 26 acres will be used for formal gardens, with the remainder to be landscaped. The site is close to the castle, which has been home to the Percy family, whose ancestors include Harry Hotspur, since 1309. The original walled garden at the heart of the plan

was built in 1750 by the 1st Duke and his wife. By 1856 the entire walled garden was planted, lawned and landscaped.

The 4th Duke opened it to the public, but by the end of the First World War it was starting to decline and during the Second World War was turned over to growing food in the Dig For Victory campaign. In 1953 the once-impressive glasshouse was dismantled and the eastern end of the garden became a tree nursery.

The duchess's plan is to build a new garden using features of the original. Pools and fountains will remain a major feature, along with waterfalls and miniature canals among pavilions and hedges of rosebushes. It is expected to open to the public by 2001.

The duchess said that she had not applied for National Lottery money because she had been advised that it was a "creation, not a restoration project". The European Regional Development Fund has, however, given £300,000 as the development will create 30 new full and part-time jobs on the estate. The duchess's management consultants estimate that up to 75 more could be created in the Alnwick area and 200 across the region.

Yesterday the duchess turned to the Internet to appeal for donations to help her restore the site to its former glory. Launching the website, The Invisible Gardens (www.alnwickgarden.com), she said: "This is to be a classical garden, created by one of the leading garden designers in the world."

"We have searched worldwide for experts in their field and we are creating a place of beauty and learning for the benefit of everyone and something of which the North East can be proud."

The idea of developing the garden came to the duchess, Jane Percy, soon after her husband, Ralph, the 12th Duke, inherited the title in 1995 on the death of his brother, Harry, who was worth an estimated £250 million. Until then they had lived with their four children managing the family's vast estates.

The duchess said: "I knew the old garden well. It was neglected and sad and in the process of being turned into a car park. But even then, standing at the top or bottom of the

garden, I had a clear vision of how beautiful it could be."

It will include a garden of the senses for the visually impaired, a garden of poisonous plants, a fruit and vegetable allotment, a grass labyrinth and a water garden with dancing jets.

Peter Wirtz said: "It will take a few months to work out this project technically. The complexity of integrating the water technology and the chal-

lenge to phase and time the construction in harmony with the seasons will certainly cause some headaches in the future," he said.

The Prince of Wales is patron of the scheme. When the proposal was first unveiled in June 1997 he said: "In seeking to recapture the lost world of this great garden, and sharing it with others, the present Duchess of Northumberland is taking up once more the innovative ideas so brilliantly demonstrated in previous generations."



The Duchess of Northumberland on the site of old Italian walled garden yesterday

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Fraud 'in third of benefit claims'

Diary, page 22

Short-changed by our approach to the euro

Just publishing a National Changeover Plan, as will happen later this month, is not enough without an explicit change in ministers' language. The Blair and Brown offices are still discussing the tone to take. Don't expect a big shift. The drift will continue.

Davies in comeback campaign

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Revolt fades as Radio 4 wins back listeners

By RAYMOND SNODDY
MEDIA EDITOR

PRESSURE on James Boyle, the Controller of Radio 4, eased yesterday as official listening figures bounced back from the sharp fall that followed his shake-up in programmes. He had promised to resign if audiences continued to plummet amid anger over his changes.

Listeners are also staying tuned for longer, which Mr Boyle said he was trying to achieve with the schedule introduced last April. In the three months up to Christmas, the average Radio 4 listener tuned in for almost 11 hours a week: the highest for more than three years.

The station had 260,000 more listeners, winning back most of the audience lost in the previous quarter, with the extended *Today* programme performing well. Early afternoon dramas are attracting larger audiences, as is *Home Truths* on Saturday mornings and the Sunday morning schedule. The numbers listening to Radio 4 at least once a week reached 7.9 million.

The improved performance of Radio 4, and Zoe Ball's success in attracting 500,000 new listeners in her first quarter as sole presenter of the Radio 1 breakfast show, signalled a



Boyle had promised to quit if ratings fell again

BBC fightback against the commercial sector. Ball took her total audience to 5.5 million as the BBC share of radio listening rose to 48.5 per cent against commercial radio's 49.3 per cent. The gap has narrowed for two quarters.

Jenny Abramsky, the Director of BBC Radio, said that yesterday's figures showed "BBC Radio is really in touch with its listeners. I am particularly pleased to see that the Radio 4 audience is settling down to the new schedule."

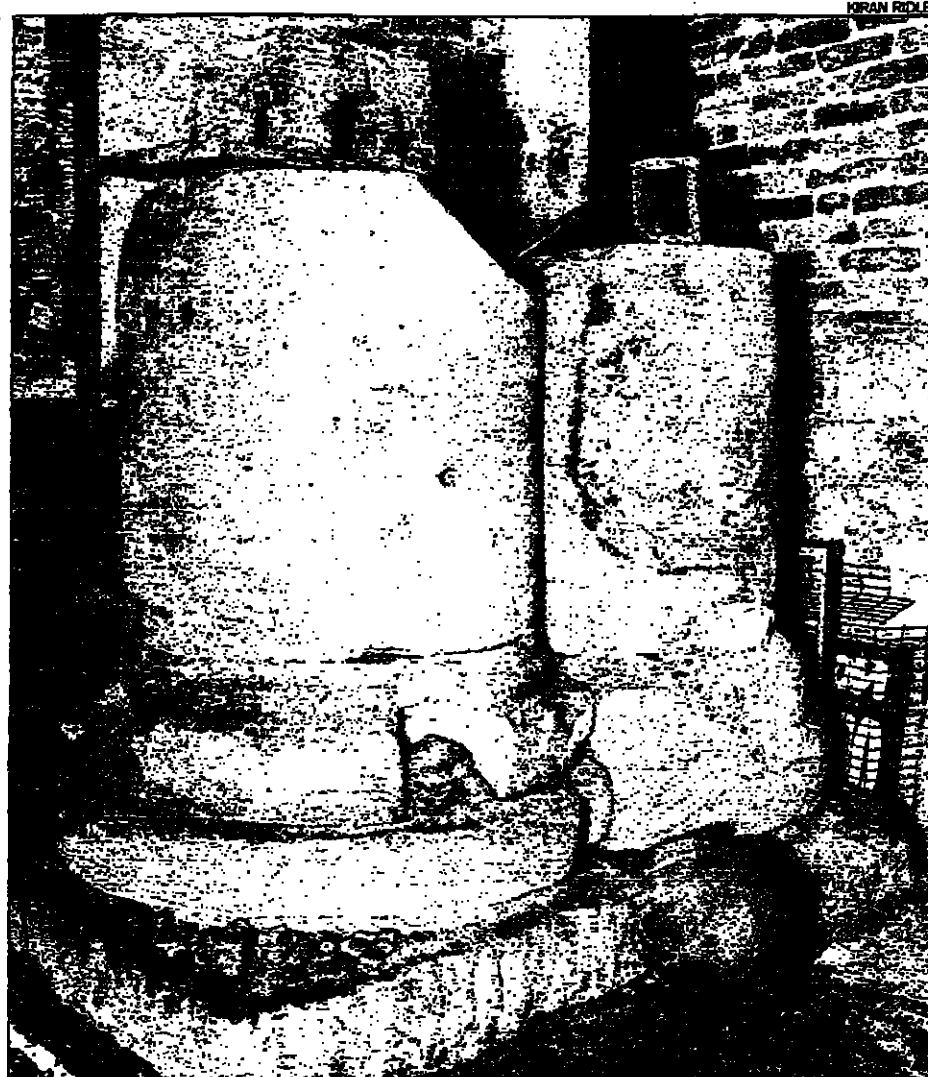
On Virgin, Chris Evans also increased his breakfast audience by 2.6 per cent and had a total of 2.54 million. Unlike Radio 1, which increased its regular listeners to 11.4 million, the highest figure for two years,

the Virgin AM service had a regular weekly listenership of just over 3 million, a drop of 4 per cent. Radio 5 Live has had its strongest year, with 5.2 million listeners. Radio 2 held its position and Radio 3 attracted 140,000 more. Classic FM hit a new peak of 5.1 million.

Rachel Fox, of the Commercial Radio Companies Association, said that commercial radio had "maintained its share of listening lead over the BBC, despite dropping back slightly".

Despite individual stations gaining, the number of hours of listening fell. The BBC dropped from 405 million hours to 402 million, with local services losing audience share, and the commercial total dropped from 422 million to 408 million.

Media, pages 38-41



The Roman pillars once supported a public building complete with shops and temple

Des res with a slice of history

FROM the outside it looks little different from any other Victorian terraced town house but the buyer of 29 Balfgate in Lincoln will get a slice of Roman history as well as a three-storey family home.

The house boasts four giant pillars, part of the remains of a first-century Roman civic centre, as well as a section of road believed to have been built between York and London by the Romans after they arrived in the area in about 42BC.

The house's owners, Jo Dunn and her sister, Suzie Pinder-Smith, have continued their parents' tradition of allowing the public to visit the ruins, yet the house is neither listed nor protected by law. It is expected to fetch more than £200,000.

The ruins were discovered during the Victorian era but the sisters' house, which was built in 1879, is the only one in the Balfgate area that has had them incorporated into its design. Mrs Dunn said that the cellar had also yielded a Roman urn and other artefacts, which had been studied by historians.

Mick Jones, the director of Lincoln's archaeological unit,



The house is expected to fetch more than £200,000

said that the pillars would have formed part of "a large public building, which would have been very much the focal point of the town in Roman times — the equivalent of the town hall if you like — but it would have included a temple, shops and offices".

The Romans considered the building so prestigious that they shipped in sandstone for the building from Derbyshire rather than using Lincolnshire limestone, he said.

5,000 seek £25m over lost jobs

By RUSSELL JENKINS, NORTH WEST CORRESPONDENT

THOUSANDS of insurance workers, who learnt they were to lose their jobs as they listened to breakfast radio, took their fight for £25 million compensation to an employment tribunal yesterday, in a ground-breaking action.

They told the hearing in Liverpool that they had been left in the dark by their employers, Royal Insurance and Sun Alliance, about plans to merge the two companies and cut staff.

The £5.4 billion merger, which created Britain's biggest insurance company, caught the City on the hop. It also took staff on Merseyside by surprise. Many first heard the news of up to 5,000 job losses during an interview on the Radio 4 *Today* programme on May 3, 1996.

The Manufacturing, Science and Finance Union claims that redundancy num-

bers were predetermined, rendering the eventual consultation with unions meaningless. The union, which is acting on behalf of the 5,000 who lost their jobs, claims that their employers breached European employment law. It is seeking three months' pay for every member made redundant.

Martin McKeown, a union officer, told the tribunal: "To my knowledge, no representative of MSF was consulted about the merger or possible redundancies prior to May 3."

Simon Gorton, counsel for the union, said the importance of the interview broadcast during the *Today* programme was formally to identify the number of job losses before the unions had been informed.

The union claims Royal and Sun Alliance breached the European Directive on Consultation and Collective Redundancies.

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Heng's view in Lianhe Zaobao of Singapore on the bribery scandal in the international Olympics movement

Korea's IOC chief accused of bribery

FROM JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

KIM UN YONG, the powerful Korean Olympic official tipped as a possible successor to Juan Antonio Samaranch as President of the International Olympic Committee, came under fresh pressure to step down last night after it was revealed that Salt Lake City had got his son a job.

Mr Kim, president of the South Korean Olympic Committee and a leading member of the IOC since 1986, could become the latest casualty of the mushrooming corruption scandal that has forced four IOC members to quit and left five others facing expulsion for allegedly accepting bribes in exchange for votes.

David Simmons, the former chief executive of a Salt Lake City satellite broadcasting concern named Keystone Communications, disclosed yesterday that he had been asked by bid committee officials to hire Mr Kim's son, Jung Hoon, known as John. He told the USA Today newspaper that the officials had made clear that the job applicant was "Dr Kim's son".

John Kim was accordingly

given a job at the company's offices in New York in the early 1990s, as Salt Lake City campaigned to become the venue for the 2002 Winter Games. Mr Simmons said that the bid committee had reimbursed Keystone for an unspecified portion of his salary.

The elder Mr Kim has attracted controversy because of the concert schedule of his daughter, the pianist Kim He Jung. She played solo with the



Kim Un Yong, Salt Lake City gave his son a job

Melbourne Orchestra when the Australian city was vying for the Olympics in 1990; appeared as the soloist at Atlanta's Olympic Arts Festival during the 1996 Games; and was paid \$5,000 (£3,000) to play two concerts with Salt Lake City's Utah Symphony Orchestra.

Utah Symphony's former music director has said she was hired "purely on merits", but he listened to her tape only after it was passed to the orchestra by local Olympic officials. A member of Melbourne's bid committee was quoted as saying: "I think she probably tinkled in the C division rather than the A."

During a stay in the South Korean city of Yongpyong, Mr Kim insisted yesterday that a distinction should be drawn between corruption and personal relations. "I detest outright bribery or corruption," he said. "But they have to be distinguished from human relations or professional business relations." He added: "I have a long, bright future spread before me."

Mr Simmons, who now

works with his family's media company in Salt Lake City, said that he had disclosed his relationship with John Kim to investigators from both the IOC and Salt Lake City Organising Committee. He said the younger Mr Kim appeared qualified for the job and had helped him to do business on two trips to Asia.

The scandal prompted new moves in Japan, where the Mayor of the northern city of Sapporo ordered an investigation into the city's unsuccessful bid for the 1998 Winter Games. A Japanese newspaper has alleged that in 1994 Sapporo paid off four IOC officials with 1 million yen each, then worth \$2,800. The city was selected as the venue for the 1972 Winter Games.

On Wednesday, Japanese Olympic officials began an inquiry into possible misconduct during Nagano's successful campaign to win the 1998 Winter Games. The IOC has asked all bidding cities for Games from 1996 to 2000 to investigate.

Drugs testing, page 52

Sydney storm over Baywatch

FROM DAVID WATTS IN SYDNEY

AUSTRALIANS were choking over their XXXs last night after the producers of Baywatch appealed for financial help to move the world's most-watched television programme to Sydney.

Most Australians don't like "bludgers" (Australian for scroungers) at the best of times, but especially not when they are millionaire Californians. There were already mixed feelings among the good people of Avalon - an exclusive beach suburb - when David Hasselhoff and his bevy of beauties flew in to shoot several episodes last year. But the inclusion of several Aussies out of the 500 girls who applied for a role soothed feelings.

Executive producer Greg Bonann maintains: "Just because we are the world's most popular show doesn't mean we're the world's wealthiest



California girls in the series seeking a new beach-head

show." Bonann claims that it costs a lot of money to ship over four powerboats, along with the necessary wardrobe and make-up facilities.

Avalon residents, who are not short of a million themselves, can spot poverty when they have to. "For Baywatch to say they are not a wealthy show is ridiculous," said a member of Avalon's anti-Baywatch brigade. "They are us-

ing Avalon to get themselves back in the top spot at below-American prices."

Bonann says Baywatch will more than repay Australia for any help that it receives, predicting that the Sydney economy would benefit to the tune of Aus\$18 million (£6.9 million) a year. It would, he said, put Avalon on the tourist map for millions of Baywatch fans every year. But putting the

place on the map is precisely what many Avalonians don't want. "When they were here last year they took over the place," said Roger Maynard, a local. "They had 12 vans and they stopped people from doing anything."

A letter to the editor in a local paper attempted to put the likes of Mr Maynard in his place: "Had the good folk of Avalon protested against Baywatch on the basis of too much cosmetic surgery, the overwhelming pungency of peroxide and thin story lines and thinner actors, well then, maybe, just maybe, they have an argument."

"But they haven't. They don't want tourists messing up their car park or kicking sand on their towels as they come to take a look at Hollywood by the sea."

Bonann's expression of love for the harbour city rings a little hollow when he says that, if Sydney won't have Baywatch, he will go to Mexico.

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Jordan officials censor news of King's illness

FOR 48 hours before King Hussein left the US after the failure of his bone marrow transplant yesterday, Jordan's 4.6 million people had been fed misleading official accounts about his condition.

Only a few hours before news of his imminent return spread by word of mouth and jammed international telephone lines, the owner of an Amman bookshop said: "They tell us nothing. The only thing that anyone in Jordan has been talking about is the King's health, and it is the one thing about which none of us knew the real truth."

A former Jordanian diplomat said: "The people are going mad. They are switching from one foreign station to another to try to find out what has happened, and then they are ringing each other to exchange the latest news. They are sad and they are worried."

Even before the dramatic announcement of the failure of the operation using bone marrow donated by Princess Basma, the King's 48-year-old sister, Jordan's forces had been placed on special alert in case of attempts by Iraq or Syria to foment instability.

Hours before news emerged from the Mayo clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, rumours had spread that the King might be near death. Relatives were reported to have flown to the United States to be by his bedside.

"The main thing that we hope and pray now is that he will get home alive," said one Jordanian source. "We all know he nearly died in the plane taking him to the US last week, which was why the Israelis reported wrongly that he was already dead."

In Amman's mass-circulation daily *Al-Rai*, the columnist Sultan Hattab reflected the feelings of his countrymen. "We are praying to God to save his Majesty... and to end the state of anxiety and confusion gripping us since he returned to the US for renewed treatment."

The public jitters could turn to panic despite efforts by palace officials to convey the impression of a smooth transfer of power to the new Crown Prince Abdullah, 37, Hussein's eldest son by his British-born wife, Princess Muna.

Anxiety has been increased by a clumsy purge of the local media. Yesterday it was an-

Public's hunger for facts left unsatisfied, Christopher Walker writes

nounced that the editor of *Al-Majd* — which gave the first full account of the deposing of Hassan, the King's younger brother, as Crown Prince — had been served a 15-day detention order by a court for violating the draconian national press code.

Al-Majd reported that the Oxford-educated Prince Hassan, 51, had laid down his revolver before the King and asked to be shot if Hussein thought he was a traitor. These details were reported in yesterday's editions of *The Times*, which has been twice barred from sale in the Hashemite kingdom over the past week because of reports about palace intrigues and the King's health. Copies of *The Sunday Times* and *The Sunday Telegraph*, normally on sale, have also been banned.

The offending papers are apparently held up by censors at the airport who check all stories relating to Jordan before releasing them for sale. Fahd Rimawi, editor of *Al-Majd*, an Arab nationalist weekly widely read in Amman, was charged with "insulting the monarch, publishing false information about the Prime Minister and members of the Government and attacks on the security service", according to Iyad Kattan, the Information Ministry chief.

Before his latest disclosures, Mr Rimawi had called in previous issues for the Prime Minister and Cabinet to resign. He is due to be freed on bail.

As part of the same purge, designed to restrict the circulation of information about the palace crisis, the board chairman of the popular Amman daily, *Al-Arab al-Yawm*, sacked two senior editors this week after they published unofficial reports on changes in the succession. The two, Tahir al-Adwan and Saleh al-Kallab, said that they had been given no reason.

Many opposition politicians see the moves as an attempt by the new regent to ensure that

details of palace intrigues are kept out of the public eye and that the Jordanian media publishes and broadcasts only official accounts of events.

But Western diplomats said such censorship only created rumours. Many Jordanians have access to foreign reports via the Internet and radio.

Ramzi Khoury, editor-in-chief of the new English-language *Arab Daily*, wrote: "It is common in this part of the world that bad news is not communicated to all family members to spare them worry. This, along with a popular suspicion of government statements on sensitive issues, has opened the door to rumours, inflicting a higher toll on the people than the truth would achieve. As for those who believe the truth is unnecessary at this time, what they are saying — probably without knowing — is that such truth is a destabilising factor."



Posters showing a fit and healthy King Hussein and his wife, Queen Noor, adorn the walls in Amman, the Jordanian capital, yesterday

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Clintons condemn Chelsea cover story

FROM IAN BRODIE
IN WASHINGTON

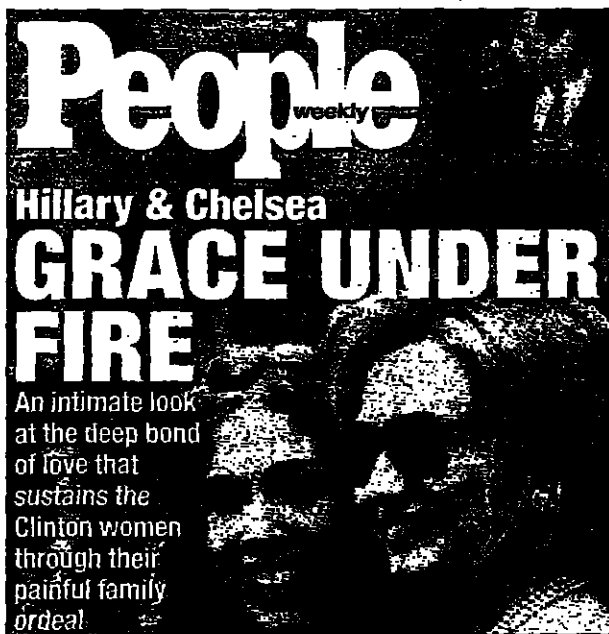
EVER the protective parents, Bill and Hillary Clinton yesterday denounced *People* magazine for running a cover story about how their daughter, Chelsea, is coping with the President's affair with Monica Lewinsky.

They said that the glossy weekly had chosen to print the article despite their personal appeals about Miss Clinton's privacy and security.

In their statement, the Clintons said they "deeply regret and are profoundly saddened" by the magazine's decision.

Until now Miss Clinton, 18, has been largely shielded from undue attention in the mainstream American media, thanks to an informal agreement between the White House and editors, *People*, published by Time Warner, went ahead with its cover story because Miss Clinton was an eyewitness to history and a valid journalistic subject, said Carol Wallace, the magazine's managing editor.

A photo of a smiling Mrs Clinton and daughter adorns the magazine which goes on sale today. The article, headlined "Grace under Fire", is de-



The *People* story breaks an informal press agreement

scribed as an "intimate look at the deep bond of love that sustains the Clinton women through this painful family ordeal".

It says they are both strong and have turned to each other for strength and solace during the Lewinsky scandal.

They exchange letters and frequent late-night phone calls. Publicly the two have stood by Mr Clinton, despite their personal disappointment about his admission last August that he had misled them about the affair.

Miss Clinton is described as

keeping her head high, refusing to let the world see her private pain. Though she reads news reports to keep up with the impeachment trial, she does not talk about the scandal even to her closest friends, the magazine said. "Chelsea has her mother's strength," says Nancy Snyderman, an old friend of Mrs Clinton. "She's been bred for it."

But the scandal has left Miss Clinton "deeply shaken", according to Mr Clinton's half-brother, Roger, in an earlier interview with *Paris Match*.

In defending the decision to publish, Ms Wallace said: "There is a great deal of admiration for this mother-daughter relationship. Over the years we have written about the Clinton family in good times and bad. Chelsea is nearly 19 years old and a poised young adult."

Miss Clinton very deliberately held the hands of both her parents as they walked, stony-faced, to the presidential helicopter the day after his Lewinsky confession. She went with her father to church when Mrs Clinton was said to be too angry to go.

Last autumn there were tabloid reports, ignored by the Clintons, that she was still having difficulty coping with her father's affair and had broken up with her boyfriend. She also had treatment for stomach pains in a clinic at Stanford University in California where she is a student.

The Clintons have in the past expressed gratitude for the media's restraint in having allowed Miss Clinton the privacy that "any young person needs and deserves", noting that she had not taken on a public role other than as "an integral part of our family".

The couple have fiercely guarded her privacy throughout their time in Washington and earlier in Arkansas when he was Governor.

Their fear now is that with Miss Clinton's veil of privacy having been pierced by *People*, which has a circulation of 3.2 million, the way will be open for greatly increased coverage of her. However, the Clintons' pre-emptive blast against *People* is likely to give all editors pause.



One of the Victoria's Secret models. Eager viewers swamped the show's website

Internet lingerie proves a letdown

BY DAMIAN WHITWORTH

AFTER so much fevered anticipation, it was unsurprising that the event itself was a bit of a letdown.

A lingerie firm jammed its website by showing a video relay from its fashion show in what was billed as the biggest live event on the Internet. But many of those who logged on did not even get a peek, and those who did found little to get hot and bothered about.

Victoria's Secret, famous for its advertisements featuring scantily clad models aimed at wooing male customers to buy something for their wives and girlfriends, had hyped its show like none other. It was trailed by the appearance of heavenly bosoms and sultry pouts in the television commercial breaks during Sunday's Super Bowl.

The firm — one of the first to advertise on a big scale on the Internet in this way — said yesterday that millions had logged on for the show.

It had planned for up to 500,000 people to be able to tune in at any one time, but had yet to release full figures yesterday.

However, rather than sashaying down the catwalk, the models moved jerkily and were only occasionally in focus. Sometimes they appeared to be in a snowstorm.

Only Victoria's Secret sales figures will show whether the million who visited its website in the days before the show began were serious customers, or were just looking.

Senate loses appetite for live Lewinsky testimony

FROM DAMIAN WHITWORTH IN WASHINGTON

THE impeachment trial of President Clinton moved into its final phase last night with the prosecution's hopes of a live appearance by Monica Lewinsky fading as senators searched for a way to conclude the proceedings swiftly.

As the Senate prepared to decide whether to call Ms Lewinsky and other witnesses in person, Trent Lott, the Majority Leader, said that the appetite for such a spectacle had gone. "It does not appear that the votes are there for live witnesses," he said after a meeting with fellow Republicans.

The 100 senators resumed sitting as a court after a break this week while Ms Lewinsky, Vernon Jordan, Mr Clinton's

confidant, and Sidney Blumenthal, his senior aide, gave depositions in private. The Senate was last night weighing whether tapes of the depositions should be played in the Senate as part of concluding presentations.

The prosecutors from the House were pressing for all three witnesses to be called to the well of the Senate, or failing that, Ms Lewinsky alone. If both requests were rejected by the Senate, as looked likely, they would settle for the videotapes to be played, either in their entirety or in parts.

Mr Lott said he hoped closing arguments would be presented early next week and be followed by a debate by sena-

tors who have been silent onlookers so far. Acutely aware of Americans' exasperation at the drawn-out trial, he said it was his wish that senators be brief; the Gettysburg Address was only a little more than two minutes long, he said pointedly.

His timetable could still be disrupted by moves by Republicans to draft a "finding of facts" motion. Under this plan, which has been dubbed "convict, but not convict", Mr Clinton would be accused of providing "false and misleading testimony" to a Grand Jury and having "wrongfully engaged in conduct to delay the discovery and cover up the existence of evidence".

Mayor reinstates 'niggardly' official

BY IAN BRODIE

WASHINGTON'S new Mayor admitted yesterday that he had acted too hastily in accepting the resignation of a white aide who upset a black subordinate by using the word "niggardly".

Anthony Williams will give David Howard another job at City Hall in the hope of ending an issue that began with the mistaken belief that the word was a racial slur. The gaffe quickly ballooned into a huge drama involving political correctness and racial sensitivity that became a national embarrassment for Mr Williams, who took over only last month from the widely criticised Marion Barry with promises to revitalise the American capital.

Mr Howard resigned as head of constituent services when rumours spread that he had used the word "nigger". The may-

or promptly accepted. In rehiring him, Mr Williams said: "While it is important for a mayor, or any leader, to act decisively, make bold decisions and create a sense of urgency, it is not always necessary to act hastily. I believe I acted too hastily."

City Hall sources said the episode would lead to a dramatic reduction in the duties of the senior aide who handled the Howard resignation and left Mr Williams so uninformed and exposed politically.

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35,000 Kosovo force ready

By MICHAEL EVANS
DEFENCE EDITOR

NATO is planning to send five brigades, three of them armoured, into Kosovo, with a 5,000-man reserve force in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, if there is a successful peace deal signed in Rambouillet.

The total size of the force, including the strategic reserve, will be about 35,000.

With the Rambouillet talks guaranteed to start tomorrow, after the Serbian parliament's approval yesterday for Belgrade to send a delegation, NATO is anxious to get a clear idea of the nature and scope of the proposed peace implement-

ation mission needed for Kosovo, so that planning can be completed as soon as possible.

Next week General Wesley Clark, NATO's Supreme Commander Europe, will present his "concept of operations" for Kosovo to the alliance's military committee in Brussels.

NATO hopes that the force envisaged for Kosovo will have the same powers as those it enjoys in Bosnia-Herzegovina, where the Implementation Force (Ifor) of 30,000 troops has almost viceregal authority, with the ability to go anywhere, search any building, demand to see any files and also to control the airspace.

If the Rambouillet talks lead to a settlement, NATO will want

an annex attached to the agreement that will spell out the role it will be expected to play in Kosovo. The Dayton peace agreement which ended the war in Bosnia included an annex that laid out NATO's mandate and responsibilities.

It remains to be seen whether Belgrade will agree to having 30,000 NATO troops based in its province with clearance to go anywhere they please.

Six NATO countries have said they will contribute to the Kosovo force which probably will be called Kfor. NATO diplomatic sources said that the force would consist of five brigades, three "heavy" and two light, made up of 15 battalions. One diplomatic source said

that one of the key issues to be resolved in the Rambouillet peace talks would be that of limiting the number of Yugoslav Army soldiers allowed to stay in Kosovo during the three-year interim period of a negotiated settlement.

The more Yugoslav troops in Kosovo, the more NATO soldiers there will have to be," the source said.

Yesterday Alain Richard, the French Defence Minister, said that France would play an important role in NATO's proposed Kosovo force, sending 5,000 troops with 40 aircraft and ships.

Britain is working on contingency plans for sending 5,000 to 8,000 troops; they will in-

clude staff from the British-commanded Allied Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC) headquarters who would be sent from Germany.

Mr Richard indicated that the French Government would be happy for a British general to be put in charge of the Kosovo force. The commander of the ARRC, Lieutenant-General Sir Michael Jackson, is expected to get the job.

Mr Richard said that the existing NATO extraction force, on standby in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to evacuate the international verification mission in Kosovo, would be the first element of the new force to be sent to Kosovo. France has the largest con-

tingent in the extraction force, which is commanded by a French general.

The United States has said that it will send between 2,000 and 4,000 troops to Kosovo, content to leave the main peace implementation role to the Europeans. However, the NATO diplomatic sources said that it would be crucial for the US contingent to have a high-profile role and not just be in support because of the impact the presence of US forces would have on Belgrade.

Greece also announced yesterday that it would send ground troops to Kosovo. Germany has already promised 3,000 troops. Canada has also confirmed it will participate.

Massacre bodies become pawns in propaganda war

THE old woman has become a little more unhinged on each of the three days I have seen her. On Tuesday she was shouting "Shame on Europe", repeatedly outside the mortuary in Pristina, a mantra interrupted only by fits of weeping. Some of her companions on that day, also shattered by bereavement, appeared equally unbalanced: one man kept pulling a segment of human skull still caked in tissue out of his pocket — he said that it was all he had left of his son.

On Wednesday, the old woman was wandering alone through the snowy wasteland around Racak, her home village and the scene three weeks ago of the worst massacre of the Kosovo conflict. "I am looking for my son," she said. But there was no one in Racak at all.

she stood in the square in neighbouring Stimlje yesterday. She was still seeking her son, but speech seemed to have deserted her and she mumbled unintelligibly.

Three weeks after the massacre, the dead have neither been laid to rest nor even reclaimed by their relatives. Instead, in the run-up to the peace talks at Rambouillet, the bodies have become pawns in a propaganda war.

The reality of what happened at Racak remains shrouded by claim and coun-

Bereaved are unable to bury the dead, writes Anthony Loyd in Stimlje

ter-claim. What is known is that four Serb policemen were killed outside the village in a Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) ambush. Subsequently at least 40 ethnic Albanian men from the village were shot in a dawn attack by the Serbs. The Serbs say that all the dead were KLA guerrillas killed in action. The Albanians say they were all civilians killed after capture.

Sacha Benz, a spokesman for the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe, which is trying to negotiate a handover of bodies, said: "This is obviously a key issue for each side. The Albanians want to make the funeral a symbolic event, with all the bodies buried at once. The Serbs want the bodies to be buried individually."

The 40 bodies have been held by the Serb authorities in the mortuary at Pristina. According to Danica Marinkovic, the Serbian judge charged with investigating the mass-

acre, 29 bodies have been identified, while the names of the other 11 remain unknown. The report of an independent team of Finnish pathologists sent to examine the bodies remains unpublished.

Two days ago the 29 identified bodies were taken by the Serbs to Stimlje, the nearest secure point to Racak, to be handed over to the Albanians. However, this initiative came to nothing when the Serbs insisted that each body could be reclaimed by only one family

member, and was then to be buried individually.

Yesterday the black circus began again, but this time the bodies never even left Pristina. In Stimlje, the expressions of the bereaved, gathered to collect dead sons, husbands or brothers, crumpled again.

"We are not asking for revenge," said an aged man with a face of a thousand lines. "We're not even asking for accountability. All I ask for now is for the dignity to bury my son as I wish."



Ethnic Albanian women wait in Stimlje yesterday for the bodies of their men, killed in Racak, to be handed over

Serbs reject Nato role

THE Serbian parliament yesterday steered itself onto a collision course with the international community and Nato, sending its delegates to the Kosovo peace conference with a clear mandate to block all attempts to remove the province from Serbia or to send in Nato peacekeepers (Tom Walker writes).

Vojislav Seselj, leader of the extremist Radical Party, said

Nato would "be prevented with all available means" and declared a national "allergy to the mere name" of France, host to the Rambouillet conference set to begin this weekend.

The parliament agreed by 227-3 votes to send delegates to the talks. President Milosevic of Yugoslavia will not travel, but Milan Milutinovic, the Serbian President, may head the team.

WORLD IN BRIEF

Russian 'spy' to face new inquiry

Moscow: Aleksandr Nikitin, the former navy captain charged with spying by the Russian Government, may spend years under virtual house arrest in his native St Petersburg after the Russian Supreme Court sent the case back for further investigation (Alice Lagnado writes).

Mr Nikitin, 46, was charged with spying in February 1996 after he contributed to a report for Bellona, a Norwegian environmental organisation, in which he accused Russia's Northern Fleet of dumping nuclear waste in the Arctic Sea. He maintained that he used publicly available information. Mr Nikitin's lawyers announced that they will now take the case to the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg.

Thieves freeze victims

Johannesburg: A South African butcher and his five employees were found frozen to death inside a meat van after a suspected armed robbery, police said. The six had been overpowered by a gang and locked inside the van at a meat factory in Vereeniging, 35 miles south of here. South Africa is one of the world's most crime-plagued countries, with an annual murder rate of 52 people per 100,000 of the population. (Reuters)

£5m Seoul poll 'gift'

Seoul: Chung Tae Soo, founder of South Korea's failed Hanbo group, testified in parliamentary hearings that he gave the former President, Kim Young Sam, 10 billion won (£5 million) to fund his 1992 election campaign. The collapse of Hanbo and other conglomerates sparked the crisis that forced South Korea to accept a bailout arranged by the International Monetary Fund in December 1997. (Reuters)

13 killed in Indonesia

Jakarta: At least 13 people died and hundreds were injured during clashes between civilians and police in Indonesia's rebellious Aceh province, a human rights group said. The Legal Aid Foundation said the deaths happened when police opened fire on a crowd in Idi Cut, about 950 miles northwest of here. Police said that two people died when a crowd waiting to hear a separatist speech was dispersed. (Reuters)

Edna average now

Sydney: Australia's favourite drag queen, Dame Edna Everage, right, is now plain Mrs Edna Everage after relinquishing her title and defecting to the republicans. She said this year's referendum on the republic had brought her out of the anti-monarchy closet in what could provide a boost for the ailing republican movement. "I've been a dame for many years. I've been worshipped in Australia and it's time I got a bit of reality into my life," she said. (AFP)



Deadly cocktail

Moscow: Every 22 minutes a Russian dies after drinking liquor of dubious origin, the Interior Ministry said, adding that in the first 11 months of last year, 31,778 people died from bad liquor, compared with 23,963 for all of 1997. Observers said the figures were suspicious: the ministry's economic crimes department has put the 1997 number at nearly 43,000. (AFP)

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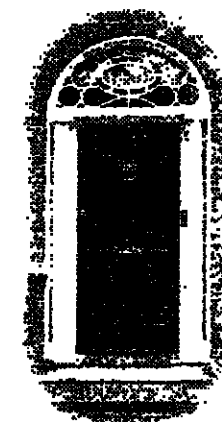
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Idle dogs of war in France bite back with strike

FROM ADAM SAGE IN PARIS

FRENCH mercenaries are in revolt over their lack of work and what they say is the failure of their leaders to pay them for the few missions that have come their way in recent years.

The malaise has reached such proportions that a group of about 30 mercenaries took the unprecedented step of going on strike last year. *Liberation* reported yesterday. The men downed arms and went fishing when they were supposed to be advising the government troops in Congo Brazzaville.

Bob Denard, the celebrated mercenary leader whose band were once known as *Les Af-freux* (The Terrors), is at the centre of the confrontation. The row has been simmering for years but came to light, his soldiers told *Liberation*, because M Denard withheld the Fr50,000 (about £5,000) bonus



Denard surrenders to the French troops in Comoros

he had promised on the eve of his failed 1995 coup attempt in the Comoros Islands. "It was only when we threatened to speak to the press that he agreed to pay the basic salary (Fr17,500 a month)," one was quoted as saying.

The accusations come

against a backdrop of widespread disillusionment among French mercenaries, driven out of their traditional African patch by better organised groups, such as the South African company, Executive Outcomes.

Their retreat mirrors that of the French state, which has lost its once considerable influence in African affairs and is struggling to maintain a foothold in its former colonies. "The French mercenary world is, at the moment, like a small and very disorganised Gallic village," said Emmanuel Pochet, tipped to take over from M Denard, 68.

Some of the most recent operations, none involving more than a few dozen men, illustrate the problem. In 1997, a 30-strong band set out for the civil war in Zaire — now the Democratic Republic of Congo — only to find that it was over.

Two years earlier M Denard had led an assault on the Comoros that turned into a fiasco. Faced by about 1,000 regular French troops, he surrendered and was imprisoned in Paris for nine months. The failure of the 1995 mission was in stark contrast to the 1980s, when M Denard and his 600-strong band propped up the Comoros Government and virtually ruled the islands. In his memoirs, M Denard said his interventions in conflicts in Morocco, Benin, Biafra and elsewhere had been carried out with at least the tacit, and sometimes the active, backing of the French secret services.

Today, however, the state has disowned M Denard. He is in semi-retirement and *Les Af-freux* have disbanded.

The latest recruits have often come from the ranks of extremist movements, including the French National Front's "security service", according to M Pochet. "If I took old soldiers close to the NF for an operation in Zaire, that's because I had to act quickly and because I had decided to get rid of the psychopaths, the cannibals and those who yearned after the SS. Some of them had been photographed eating a prisoner's liver in Burma," M Pochet said.



Russian mission control technicians monitor yesterday's failed attempt to deploy a mirror in space to reflect light into the dark corners of Earth

Reflecting on Russia's darker side

THE Russian attempt yesterday to unfold a giant mirror in space that would illuminate the country's darker expanses was condemned by scientists before it had even begun. But clearly these people have never lived in the darker parts of Russia during the winter months.

The experiment failed, much to the grief of Western observers — and to the disappointment of people like me. During nearly two winters spent in St Petersburg, I would have gladly paid good money to receive a few minutes of sunshine. Repeated efforts yesterday by cosmonauts involved in the Mir space station's *Znamya* (Banner) experiment failed to unfold the 25-yard flower-shaped mirror. The mirror apparently snagged on an antenna, and a second attempt will be made today if technicians are able to remedy the problem overnight.

The people of St Petersburg can only hope. The city is on a latitude level with Alaska, and though in summer the glorious white nights make it possible to read a newspaper in the street at 3am, in winter sunlight is a brief encounter framed by long hours of darkness.

St Petersburg is dark — very dark. During my first winter there I mutated into an antisocial, apathetic creature, a kind

of mole in human form. I had enough sleep, but felt permanently exhausted. My skin was a papery pale blue. I felt lugubrious and spent evenings slumped over a book and avoiding social contact because, well, it involved going outside.

However, I soon discovered that among the Russians, who I thought were too tough to become miserable over such

a banal thing as the weather, there were plenty of fellow complainers. Marina, a glamorous crime reporter, hated it so much she wanted to marry a West European man just to get away.

The most common solution was vodka. "I don't know how I'd get through winter without it," said Lena, a lawyer, who apart from her regular vodka shots was incredibly healthy. The weather was also, I'm sure, why extra-marital affairs were a way of life. It's a warm, indoor activity that passes the time and lifts the spirits.

The dark has also given Russian literature its fairly well-deserved reputation for grimness. How could Dostoevsky have done anything useful in Tuscany? What would Gogol get up to in California? They would be lost without that ready-made bleak atmosphere — and their readers might have actually enjoyed a novel instead of wanting to shoot themselves.

So before you criticise the space mirror on environmental grounds, think of how many marriages it could save. How many drink problems it could avoid. How the Russian novel could be reborn as a joyous paean to the goodness of life instead of a bitter testimony to human weakness. And compare that to the upset a mirror might cause a few reindeer.



The mirror would shed light on St Petersburg

Papon sues over 1961 killing of Algerians

Paris: Claims that French police killed dozens of Algerians in Paris in October 1961 were raised yesterday in a libel suit by Maurice Papon, convicted of crimes against humanity (Adam Sage writes).

Papon, sentenced to ten years' jail last year for his wartime role in deporting Jews to Nazi Germany, is suing Jean-Luc Einaudi, an historian, who claims that Papon, as Paris police chief, ordered the crackdown in which up to 200 supporters of Algerian independence died.

The incident was ignored until M Einaudi testified at Papon's trial. An official has since admitted that "several dozen" people died as a result of "very heavy" police action.

M Einaudi's legal team says Papon's motive in bringing the lawsuit is to try to influence his court appeal this year against his conviction for wartime crimes against humanity.

Yesterday's hearing opened as documents published from French Army archives revealed the torture of Algerian prisoners in the former colony.

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Lloyds Bank Plc has decreased its Base Rate to 5.50 per cent p.a. from 6.00 per cent p.a. with effect from close of business, Thursday 4th February 1999.

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3.25	3.29	£2,000 - £24,999	2.75	2.78	
2.75	2.78	£500 - £1,999	2.25	2.27	
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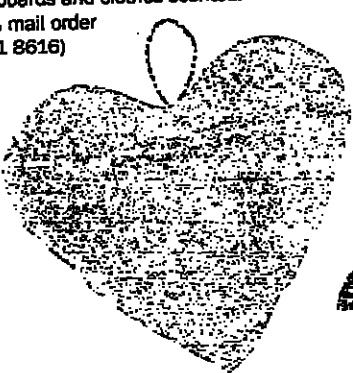
Scented cushions

WHITE LINEN, £30
Linen pillow, densely packed with dried rose petals, has a pungent scent - too strong for some. Cologne & Cotton, 791 Fulham Road SW3 (0171-736 9261) 9/10

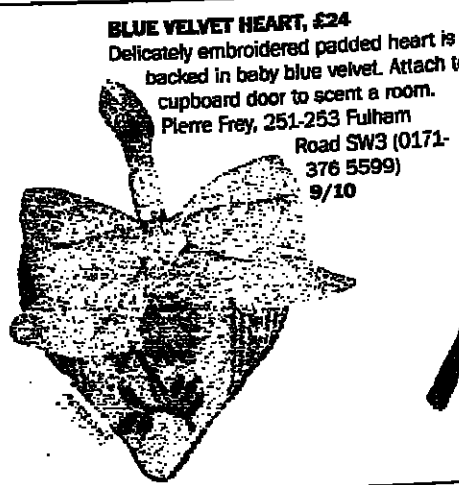


RUST BEADED VELVET, £33.95
Rectangular velvet bean-bag pillow filled with lavender. Turquoise and amber-coloured glass bead fringing adds an ethnic touch. Graham & Green, 10 Elgin Crescent W11 (0171-727 4594) 8/10

FUCHSIA HEART, £8
Silk taffeta lavender "with love" heart. Gold braid loops around hangers to keep cupboards and clothes scented. The Cross mail order (0171-221 8616) 10/10



GINGHAM SQUARES, £16
Elegant checks and stripes in varying tones of blue reminiscent of men's shirts. Available in a set of three lavender squares, comfortable and familiar. Margaret Howell, 24 Brook Street W1 (0171-495 4888) 10/10



BLUE VELVET HEART, £24
Delicately embroidered padded heart is backed in baby blue velvet. Attach to cupboard door to scent a room. Pierre Frey, 251-253 Fulham Road SW3 (0171-376 5599) 9/10

TASSLE, £20.68
Quilted square with beautiful sledging illustration and elegant green braid loop and tassel. Could be used anywhere in the home. Pierre Frey, as before 9/10



Elle Macpherson dispenses with the idea that pregnancy demands concealing drapery

You're looking just swell

Let us suppose that, like Viscountess Linley, blooming prettily on the front pages of the weekend papers, you suddenly find - casting your mind back to that sudden surge of pre-Christmas affection for your husband, and doing a quick calculation on your fingers - that you, too, are in an interesting condition. What is the first thing you should do? Hire a birthing pool? Book your husband a course of antenatal classes? Put the clump of cells' name down for Eton? All very important, but even more crucial is that you should make a firm resolution not to start reading the magazines published for the Future Mother.

Why not? Because they are dreary, that's why. Pregnancy is a thrilling and rewarding experience, during which you have a fair chance of looking as pretty and sexy as you ever have in your life. But if you read these magazines, you will be able to think of nothing but varicose veins and stretch marks. As for the fashion - it is enough to drive anyone to a hot bath and a bottle of gin. Page after page of leopard-print overalls in nasty sym-

CUTTING EDGE

JANE SHILLING

thetics and unspeakable maternity dungarees.

I wonder why the manufacturers of maternity wear think that British women undergo at the moment of conception a taste transplant that leads them to abandon their habitual quirky and self-assured look. (I exempt from this jeremiad *Prima Baby* magazine, which at least realises that pregnant women don't want to dress like toddlers: the Vertbaudet catalogue, which has some flashes of French brio, and Formes, a French label with a pronounced, if conventional, sense of style. If you can't get through pregnancy without a midnight-blue silk fitted dress and jacket with diamanté buttons, £185, Formes is for you. Its smoke-grey cotton satin pedal pushers, £55, and matching four-button jacket, £135, are quite nice, too.)

Why do women put up with this awful stuff? The answer is, I imagine, that many of them don't. It is hard to see why anyone would want to spend money on clothes with a life of just nine months. I doubt whether Lady Linley will be spending the next few months trussed up in maternity dungarees. And I don't suppose it even entered the head of Push, Scary and Whatsername from All Saints to go trolling down to their local Mothercare or Dorothy Perkins Maternity. They went on wearing exactly what they've always worn, dispensing merrily with the idea that pregnancy demands concealing drapery or fussy details to "distract" the eye - as though anything could distract attention from the fact that one looks, as Colette put it, like a rat making off with a stolen egg.

The best-dressed pregnant women are those who wear clothes that celebrate their new, gravid shape. Trying to achieve this ideal, I spent my pregnancy in the grip of a black cotton-Lycra bodysuit by Jasper Conran. The Lycra supported everything that needed support, and made the best of the bits that remained slender.

If I were in the early stages of pregnancy now, I might head for Top Shop, where there is a huge selection of pretty A-line skirts with stretchy waists. Drawstring fatigues are £32, and a long, cosy fleece skirt in grey or cream with a drawstring waist is £32.

At Warehouse, a sexy little black jersey dress is £40 and a long, fine wool tunic in palest grey is £35 - good with black acetate jersey wide-leg pants from Wallis, £45. Next, which cuts generously, has a statu-



Lisa Rinna, left, and Paula Yates went on wearing exactly what they have always worn



esque embroidered crinkle viscose long dress and coat in sand or navy for £79.99. At Laura Ashley there is an entire wardrobe in cable-knit cream and navy cotton - a long skirt is £45, a tunic £50, and an ankle-length cardigan coat, £80.

Marks & Spencer has a collection in crinkle viscose, in sand, camouflage green, white and black; wide-leg pants with an elastic waist are £30, a long

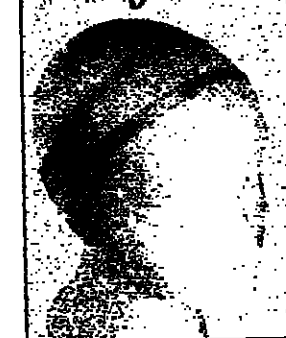
shirt, £35, and a sleeveless tunic, £26. If you have a party to go to, their white viscose pants could be lifted spectacularly out of their league by a white devoré shawl coat with dusty pink and green velvet flowers from English Eccentrics, £395, or a ravishing devoré tunic with a classical pattern in Wedgwood blue velvet on white chiffon, £450.

Georgina von Etzdorf, too.

is ideal for style-conscious mothers-to-be. Her collection includes silk jersey T-shirts, £167, and dresses, £390, and an exquisite white linen kimono coat, densely swirled with tender green, £487, which might have been designed on purpose to make a girl proud to be pregnant.

● Verbaudet 0500 332211; Formes 0181-689 1133

Objects of desire



■ This flower bracelet's excess of beads, plastic floral arrangement and chainlink detailing cascades beautifully on to the hand.

From £55 by Coleen Island at Whistles, 12-14 Saint Christopher's Place W1 9 (0171-487 2705)

■ The latest hip head accessory is the double bra-band, named because it is based on bra straps. Hair should be scraped back into a ponytail, attach the bra-band round the head and place at the front of the hairline, then carefully pull each band back, release the ponytail and a sleek bra-band look will remain.

£5.99 by Johnny Loves Hair; must order (0171-375 3574)

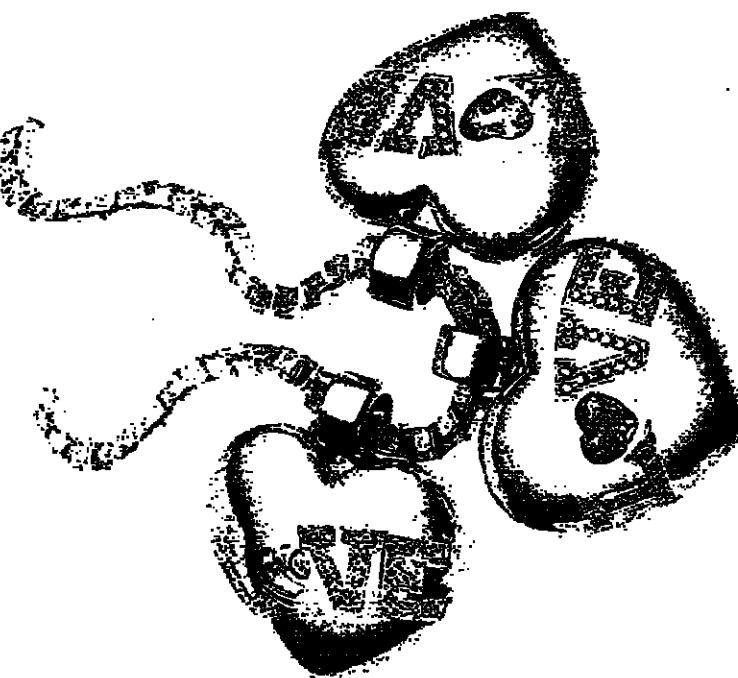
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HOT TIP

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Love turns bard



Joseph Fiennes and Gwyneth Paltrow in *Shakespeare in Love* — witty Shoppardian dialogue, the ironic use of anachronism and lots of sex

Shakespeare in Love is one of those films purpose-built for the "courtship couple". Yet, as with so many of the bard's romantic comedies, there is an element of mistaken identities here. You think you're getting a light romantic pick-me-up. As a twenty or early thirty-something with intellectual pretensions, you would not dream of putting him on seat for the likes of *You've Got Mail*. But with *Shakespeare in Love* you can cite witty Shoppardian dialogue and the ironic use of anachronism as justification. The appearance of Gary from *Men Behaving Badly* wearing a baggy doublet is an added bonus for men of the *Loaded* generation. Oh, and there is lots of sex, some of it involving Gwyneth Paltrow. So, a feelgood movie all round. Well, perhaps not. There is anecdotal evidence that, far from providing therapeutic escapism, this film is thrusting a rapier into the side of relationships. Couples enter the cinema in a state of sound emotional health, and exit with seeping flesh wounds. It is less than a week since it went on general release, but in

Far from providing romantic escapism, *Shakespeare in Love* is thrusting a rapier into the side of settled relationships, says Grace Bradberry

one London literary agency the blood is already on the carpet. A happily married thirty-something acquaintance reports that two of her younger colleagues have required wine-bar therapy after viewing this apparently harmless romantic comedy.

In both cases an evening at the cinema ended in a blazing row. One woman could not sleep all night, and next morning informed her boyfriend that their ten-year relationship was going nowhere. What with work deadlines, mortgages, and the scarcity of London properties with "outside space" there seemed to be neither time nor scope for balcony scenes, trysts, and above all passion.

Perhaps it's precisely because we live in a society that

gives the illusion of there being few barriers to love — race, class, economic standing are portrayed as low hurdles to be unthinkingly leapt — that our emotional lives often bob along at a rather even pace.

Far from experiencing the grand amour, many of the children of the Sixties and early Seventies (the era of free love), now find themselves in what you might call "comfortable shoe" relationships. Hearing Viola (Gwyneth Paltrow), declare, "I will have poetry in my life," may be all that is needed to plunge women in warm, stable but rather becalmed partnerships headlong into crisis.

The final image of Viola walking alone on some distant shore is not the most encouraging metaphor for married life. In Elizabethan times it may have been essential to compromise in marriage, sacrificing romantic love to material and social concerns, but in a freer age surely it isn't?

This question turks in the minds of thousands of young women as they teeter on the brink of marriage, but perhaps because we apparently have complete freedom to make the match we choose, it is rarely asked out loud. A film such as *Shakespeare in Love*, which apparently presents the real McCoy, can induce a nasty realisation that there may be something missing in a long-term relationship.

As an antidote to the film, it's worth quoting one of Dorothy Parker's cynical verses: "By the time you say you're

his/Shivering and sighing/ And he vows his passion is/ Infinite, undying — / Lady, make a note of this: One of you is lying." If she's even slightly right in this jaundiced view, then compromise — and a bit of fibbing — is necessary or no relationship would outlast the first stay-overs.

In fairness, the film's script has plenty of antidotes of its own. For starters, Will Shakespeare is married, a rather relevant detail that he doesn't see fit to declare to Viola. For another, the film cuts between the love scenes of Romeo and Juliet and those between Will and Viola, as though an exactly mirrored life — then undercuts this with literary jokes. The owl and the lark that make up Will and Viola's early morning conversation become the distinctly more poetic nightingale and the lark in the play. Still, it is true that Will and Viola don't spend their early mornings debating whether to get a cleaner or whose turn it is to change the duvet cover. (Viola has a nurse to sort these kinds of things out — every girl should get one.)

So, how to survive a night at the flicks with Joseph Fiennes and co? If the cement of your relationships is already riven with fissures it's best not to go at all. If it isn't, go armed with these thoughts: Viola is a virgin. Will is a married man, and these two salient facts account for a lot of the passion. Second, the man Gwyneth Paltrow is asked to marry may have many faults, but underneath it all he is still Colin Firth. Your partner too may have hidden qualities.

Third, they always make love at her place not his. The amazing manor house with the river approach undoubtedly contributes to the romance — in other words it has a hard, material foundation. If you junk your partner for a pauper, you will never own a property with a balcony. And finally, the film is a comedy not a tragedy — they don't die for love.

ARTS

A cultural revolution at the LPO: pages 34-37

Oh, the sweet music of Black & Decker

Which one us town-dwellers does not occasionally ache to be a little closer to Nature and its many breath-taking marvels, such as butterflies, the Northern Lights, and the concept "centre of gravity", the structural engineering miracle which enabled Anila Ekberg to always remain upright even though her breasts stretched so far ahead of her that they needed their own passports when travelling?

So imagine my delight at spotting an ad by a company called Britannia Gold offering a selection of compact discs called *Serenity* which enable us to "escape from the frustrations of modern living as the therapeutic and deeply inspiring sounds of nature, intermixed with beautiful New Age melodies, create the perfect environment for peace and tranquility". A total of ten CDs — including *The Mystic Sea*, *Chorus Of Whales*, *Tranquil Harbour*, and even *Crash Surf* — all for only £3.95.

Serenity is clearly responding to a growing urban yearning for the sounds of Nature. BBC Radio 3 has already made its own nod to Nature by broadcasting a series consisting of nothing but sounds of wind, rain, tweeting birds and crashing waves. The soothing effect of these recordings was only slightly marred by a subsequent admission by Bob Geldof, whose production company made the programmes, that the soothing sounds we heard in *Rainfall* — remember that downpour in a tropical rainforest in Malaysia? — had been created by turning on a domestic shower in a bathroom in North London.

But we townies didn't mind because — given our complete lack of understanding of its mysteries — we didn't actually notice. In *Madagascar*, where Nature is something you are required by law to put in a popper-scooper, they were so impressed they gave *Rainfall* a special radio award.

Still, the idea of sitting at home and having the world brought to you on CD is so thrilling that there's a big reason to deprive people who live in the countryside of the buzz of city life. It's time Britannia produced CDs that allow townies to "escape from the frustrations of endless greenery and bleating sheep as the therapeutic sounds of the Big Smoke create the perfect environment for tearing out your hair or even murdering your next-door neighbour with the sander attachment of his Boeck power drill."

These tapes would also be very relaxing for those townies among us who suffer with drawl symptoms when venturing outside the M25 because of the unmistakable accom-

panies of large animal life that seems to be roaming around without leads.

An initial selection should include a tape on which the only sound is the insistent task-task-task you hear leaking from the Walkman of the person sitting next to you on the Tube. The CD officially lasts for 40 minutes (that is, roughly the same time as it takes to circumnavigate the Circle Line) although there will also be an extended remix version lasting at least 85 minutes to accommodate the Circle Line's trademark signal failures and points failures.

Another CD would carry the sound of building works being undertaken just the other side of a party wall (a blend of Black & Decker, Radio One, and occasional yells, including "Quick! Turn it off at the mains before we're flooded!"). A compilation CD would bring together the sounds of various male executives using their mobile telephones to call their secretaries from the train and say: "Hello? Sally? Simon here. Just calling to collect my messages. What none? OK, well you know how to get me if anyone does call."

There will also be a special set of recordings for those who find the sound of Westminster politics soothing, including a regularly updated CD in which Tony Blair pursues his policy of bypassing newspapers which distort what he is trying to say by speaking directly to each one of us in our sitting-rooms.

To end unsubstantiated title-tattle about what his ministers get up to, the CD will include recordings of Robin Cook at the airport telling his former wife Margaret that he has just been informed via pager message that it was time to end their marriage; another of Blair discussing with Alastair Campbell whether, on the basis of overnight focus group findings that the nation is appalled by Glenn Hoddle's views on reincarnation and the disabled, he should give a display of decisive leadership by jumping on the bandwagon and calling for Hoddle to go; and a discreet recording of Mr Blair asking his closest advisers if, given new Labour's disgust with inherited privilege, it wasn't now time for him to abolish the Queen and perhaps replace her with a commoner like, um, maybe himself who — only for a transitional period of 30 years — would be addressed as Your Majesty so as to maintain some sense of continuity during the move to a more democratic system.

These ten CDs will also sell for just £9.99 — though once you've heard them I'm confident that you, too, will think they sound as if they should have cost much, much less.



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Tony, I've got a bone to pick

The Prime Minister should rein in his out-of-control freaks

You are 70 times more likely to win the National Lottery jackpot than to die from eating beef on the bone. You are 100 times more likely to be killed by a bolt of lightning. And you are 10,000 times more likely to be murdered. Your chances of dying in any one year from flu are one in 5,000; from eating beef on the bone, they are one in 1,000,000,000.

So you do not have to be a mathematician to realise that Nick Brown's decision to extend the ban on certain cuts of meat is hopelessly disproportionate to the risk. And it makes me wonder about Tony Blair's supposed determination to curb his ministers' bossiness.

For Downing Street is worried about the charge that it is turning Britain into a nanny state. On Monday, the Better Regulation Task Force is hosting a seminar at the Cabinet Office on risk and government intervention. Three members of Mr Blair's staff are attending. This will be followed by a private seminar of ministers, culminating in a session with the Prime Minister to discuss how to improve the handling and communication of risk.

The Government could start by treating us as adults. Since the 1950s, we have become less deferential and more confident. We care about our health, but we understand it better too. From newspaper health pages to the Internet, there is a wealth of independent information to be had.

Moreover, we are far happier to take risks that are "voluntary" than those that are forced upon us. So, for instance, we may choose to ski or to ride a horse, both of which are dangerous, while rescaling air pollution which may be less harmful. An academic study has found that people are willing to accept risks some 1,000 times greater from voluntary activities than from involuntary ones that give them the same benefits.

Eating a T-bone steak is a voluntary pursuit. As long as shops attach a label informing customers that there is a minuscule risk of infection, that should be the limit of government intervention. The same is true for unpasteurised milk and vitamin B6.

But politicians and bureaucrats never seem to take the rewards into account in their obsession with reducing risk. When ministers talk about cutting deaths on the road from drink driving, they never mention the vast reduction in enjoyment and convenience that halving the drink-drive limit would cause. When they try to restrict doses of vitamin B6, they do not stop to think about the health benefits that the vitamin offers. And when they ban beef on the bone, they do not bother to quantify the pleasures lost, or indeed the livelihoods lost, from the prohibition. In other words, people balance risk and reward — politicians and bureaucrats often do not.

Nor do they accept that it can be perfectly rational to run risks that others consider unacceptable. I might well prefer to die of a coronary at 60 having enjoyed delicious

food all my life than restrict myself to lettuce and bran and last a decade longer.

When there is no reward, only risk, it may often be right to intervene. There is no pleasure to be gained from drinking unsafe tap water or from having to boil it first. We all benefit when the Government ensures that tap water is drinkable.

And when the safety of others is endangered by the risks we take, there is a case for action too. So, while I believe that the Government should allow people to smoke cannabis in their homes, I do concede that it should stop them driving under the influence. But, even when others' safety is concerned, ministers should still balance rewards against risk. After all, they could eliminate deaths by banning cars altogether. But society accepts a certain amount of danger in return for the convenience of using a car.

There is no consistency to the way politicians react to risk these days. The Tories went into denial faced with the possibility that BSE might cause Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease in humans. Labour went into a flat spin faced with the possibility that beef-on-the-bone might kill one in a billion people. Now we have the odd spectacle of Labour banning T-bone steaks but allowing genetically modified food to go ahead.

The Conservatives hold exactly the opposite positions. The Tory leader may be motivated by no more than political opportunism, but for once I side with William Hague. The risks of GM food to the environment, to birds, to insects, let alone to humans, are unknown — possibly unknowable — and potentially huge. What of the rewards? They may be great in sub-Saharan Africa, but in Britain, we produce too much food already. And here is a Government not managing an existing risk, but introducing a new risk into the country.

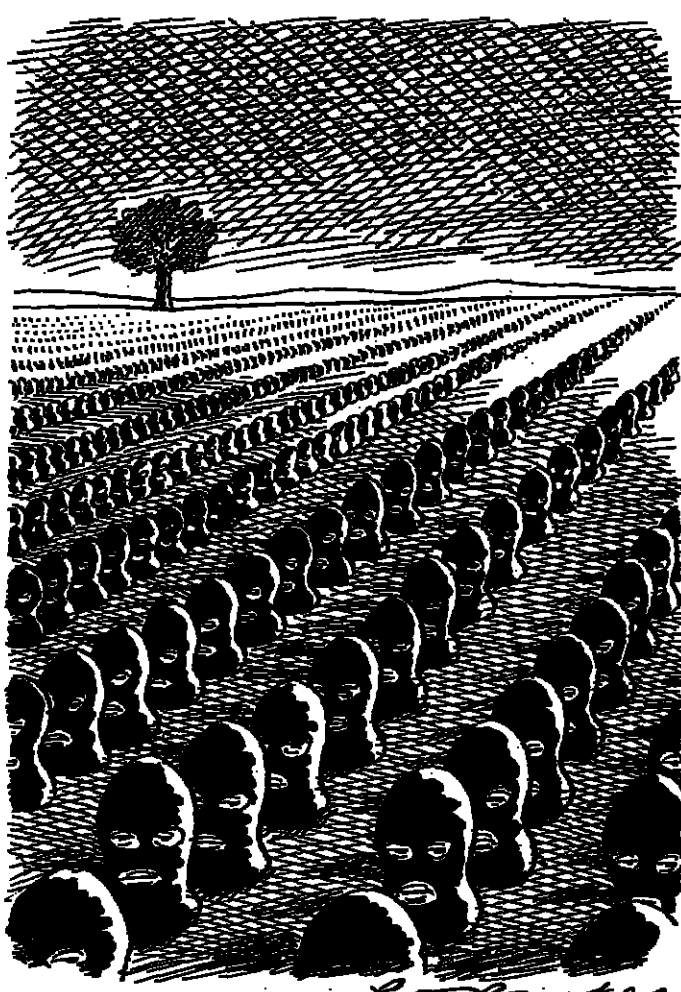
Moreover, it is a risk that individuals can neither avoid nor control. They can control the risk of salmonella by cooking their chicken properly; they can avoid the risk of CJD by eschewing beef. But people living near fields of GM crops have no choice in the matter. And we may all rue a dearth of skylarks or an infestation of insects if the introduction of GM plants disturbs the fragile balance of Britain's ecosystem.

It is time that ministers got the business of risk into proportion. They should be allowed to intervene only when the size of the risk justifies it, when the rewards do not offset it and where citizens cannot choose to avoid the risk for themselves. Otherwise, they bring the whole regulatory system into disrepute. Politicians are always bawling the public for acting neurotically in the face of food or health scares. But they can hardly expect us to be rational — and to trust them — when they are prepared to act hysterically themselves.

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YOU REAP WHAT YOU SOW...



Don't blame the harlots

The press doesn't bring down public figures, weak institutions do

Get them for sex. If not sex, then try money. If the money doesn't burn, try religion. Try anything. But get them. Bring the bastards down. Each week needs a corpse. Voltaire said, to keep the English ruling class in order. Any accountability will do. Or as the Aztecs presciently pointed out, without regular human sacrifice how can you possibly maintain the circulation of the Sun?

The destruction of the England football manager Glenn Hoddle this week was an instance of "virtual" mob rule. A crowd with its blood up took a wink from the sheriff, closed on the hapless victim, kicked him to death, and then drew back in horror from the deed. Reason was immaterial. As people dispersed, they mumbled nervously that he was "a known wanker" and had probably "given offence". They seemed briefly fearful of their power. The street was soon empty, but for a girl weeping over the corpse.

Barely a week goes by without these ritual slayings. Harriet Harman, Ron Davies, Derek Draper, Peter Mandelson, Geoffrey Robinson, Charlie Whelan, Will Carling, Tom Spencer, Glenn Hoddle, a Roman Catholic bishop, a public school headmaster, anyone will do. Whatever their misdeeds, they have been selected from the ranks of the well-known or less well-known. They are hauled before a kangaroo court, where the audience demands swift, intense and dramatic justice.

The recent destruction on grounds of sex of the careers of two politicians, Ron Davies and Tom Spencer, was wholly out of proportion to their "crimes". The offences committed were to the dignity of their office, and only when revealed. Like similar fates meted out to David Mellor and a former Chief of the General Staff, private lives affected public duties only when it was shrouded so loud as to become self-fulfilling. The usual justification for such intrusion, whatever the catalyst, is "hypocrisy on the part of a public figure". This is now a catch-all justification. Even if the victim has never uttered a word on sex or the family, the mere fact of being well-known renders his privacy violable. Like a pop star or a footballer, he is a "role model", preferably throwing in relief some salacious incident.

The hounding from office of Mr Mandelson and Mr Robinson was

hardly different. Their private dealings merited inquiry only where it impinged on their public duties. There was clear evidence of unwisdom, but not of corruption, maladministration or theft. The decapitation of both was ludicrously severe. As for Mr Hoddle, his bizarre religious views may have caused disabled lobbyists a frosty soundbite, and evoked from Tony Blair his sofa rendering of Judge Dredd in *The Crucible*. But the lesson is alarming. Every corner of public life is subject to a neo-Stalinist code of practice, in which anyone remotely famous must guard their every word and deed on pain of a midnight knock on the door and their reputations splattered over the front page next day — with their jobs splattered the day after.

At this point the familiar cry is to blame the press. True, the press is a dreadful court of assize. It has the instincts of a lynch mob and knows no penalty short of death. It also treats the public deeds of politicians as boring, and therefore unworthy of scrutiny, and uses their private lives to stand proxy. A statesman can be responsible for horrendous mistakes in his public life. But such mistakes are dull fare. If you want serious column inches on a Lord Chancellor or a Foreign Secretary these days, you reveal his choice of wallpaper or mistress.

Yet the power of the press to bring down public figures in this way is phoney. Baldwin's "harlots" gibe was a fallacy. The press may be without responsibility — who ever pretended otherwise? — but its power is a function only of what is granted by others. The press sacks nobody. Prime Ministers sack. Tory parties sack. Football Associations sack. They may delegate the job to the press. How often are the spin-doctors heard muttering, "pressure irresistible... nothing wrong

but looks bad... rather mishandled"? But these are the words of politicians passing the buck.

One reason for the media's role as Acas of the gutter is that other conduits of government accountability have atrophied. Britain lacks de Tocqueville's "intermediate institutions of democracy", of an effective parliament, local councils, semi-independent parties. In deciding whether a colleague should resign, a Prime Minister would once have taken proper soundings.

He would have consulted colleagues in Cabinet, in Parliament, and the party in the country. He might have asked others to investigate and not rely on "media reaction".

Political centralism has removed these mediating institutions. That Mr Davies's home base in Wales was behind him was of no account. Mr Mandelson's supporters in his department or his constituency were nothing compared with "how it looked in the press". Mr Hodd-

le's record as a football coach was nothing when the political spin was against him. There were no half punishments available to these men. "Must go" is stronger than "is censured" or "says sorry". The law demands great tenderness towards humble employees these days. Perhaps in reaction, we treat public figures with facile ruthlessness.

I almost respect those who survive. Robin Cook must at present conduct his duties as Foreign Secretary while his former wife discloses to the press the most intimate details of their marriage. There is no conceivable public benefit in this, only personal revenge. The intrusion on Mr Cook's privacy is monstrous and he has no defence, given the weakness of the press complaint machinery. The American philosopher Thomas Nagel, commenting on the Clinton case, recently drew attention to the

need of any human personality for layers of intimacy defended by privacy. The potential for hurt in human relations is infinite, he said. An inner life is essential. So too are the inner privacies and confidences of family and friends. Public figures without such layers are hollow and probably dangerous.

These layers are protected by conventions of reticence, sometimes even of lies, which society has learnt to respect. There are "questions a man does not ask, and a lady does not answer", and vice versa. A lawyer or a journalist can tear away such conventions and shout "lies and hypocrisy". But to what good? Nagel describes as "nauseating" the current media humbug that "Americans cannot trust their leaders when that trust is damaged by a sexual lie". Every poll says that Americans do respect the conventions of privacy, even in a reprobate such as President Clinton.

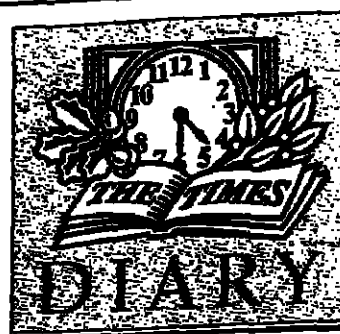
When trial by ordeal was abolished by Pope Innocent III in favour of "high-tech" torture, the old guard protested. They pointed out that torture was cruel, secretive and biased to the prosecution. Ordeal had been a voluntary lie-detector test, conducted in public but with judgment postponed to await the healing process. Final decision lay with the authorities. Over half of recorded cases were acquittals. Historians came to look on "the ordeal" with favour as a check on mob justice. It worked. Trial by the press is more like torture. The prosecution is in the lead throughout. The victim can choose whether to accept guilt and execution or die on the rack. Few escape.

There is an alternative to this deplorable state of affairs. It is for those who hold democratic power to treat the press as critic but not master. The phrase, "the press made it impossible for him to stay in office" is a cry of impotence, sign of an introverted, media-obsessed political culture. Public figures should render to the public those things that are properly the public's, and take the occasional risk in doing so. They should not be held accountable to the public for their private lives or beliefs. That way they become dehumanised. But this means politics seizing back the power it has casually ceded to the press. I see no sign of it at present.

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Simon Jenkins



High and dry

JONATHAN AITKEN is to fly into battle with the Duke of Gloucester and Lord Hattersley to ban millennium celebrations in Westminster.

A twin attack from a conservation group and the Westminster Society looks likely to leave Tony Blair's plan for all-night millennium drinking high and dry. The prospect of Westminster — including Trafalgar Square — being clogged with sauced revellers has brought local toffs out in a flush.

"We have made our points to the council," says Sir John Bailey, chairman of the Westminster Society (run by the Duke of Gloucester and Dr Wesley Carr, the Dean of Westminster). "Our fear is that there will be 36 hours drinking every new year from now on."

Next month the Thorney Island Society eco-warriors (Alan Duncan, Hatters and Aitken) will discuss strategy. The Tory council is favourably inclined. Aitken has a possible escape: a stint in the clinic.

THE secret of Ann Widdecombe's striking appearance: black dye. "Oh, yes, I do have my hair coloured," she tells me. "I don't like grey. My own is white."

Type cast?

MICK JAGGER is to play Dylan Thomas (right) in a film of the poet's life. The Rolling Stone (left), scratchy after his split from Jerry

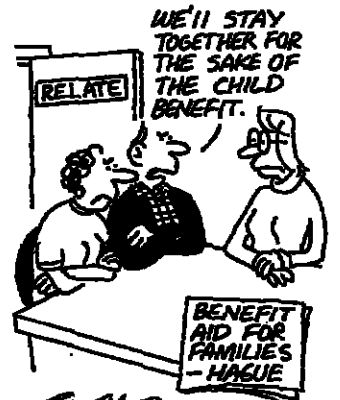


Hall, has commissioned Jagged Films (the clever name for his outfit) to make *Map of Love*, a familiar tale of turbulent affairs and binge boozing. Says a drum stick: "Mick has his eye on the part." Ah, poetry.

A RABBI and professor of Judaism is to inspire debate in NW11 by claiming that Hitler was neither mad nor evil, but rather motivated by Utopian, utilitarian ideals. Dan Cohn-Sherbok, of the University of Wales, says: "We want to present Hitler as the embodiment of evil but that's a mistake. They were idealists with a deranged ideology." Enjoy.

Flirty Francis

FRANCIS MAUDE has invited "red" Oskar Lafontaine to the House of Commons. His plan: for Oskar to address the finance committee where he will proclaim need for tax harmonisation — pleasing, no doubt, that cautious Europhile, Gordon Brown. Francis has more stunts than Evil Knievel.



COULD Frank Warren be a poor loser? The boxing promoter is writing to Lord Irvine of Lairg to grumble about links between Don King's lawyers and Sir Gavin Lightman, the judge in the case that cost Warren £7 million. He means that the judge came from the same set as Michael Briggs, the American promoter's brief, Trevor Asserson, King's solicitor, also attended the wedding of Lightman's daughter during the case. So why didn't he object earlier?

School ties

PROUDLY déclassé, Sir Robin Janvria, the Queen's new Private Secretary, differs from earlier courtiers. Like the late Sir Alan Lascelles — flunkie to three kings and the Queen — Sir Robin attended Marlborough, in contrast to Old Etonian Sir Robert Fellowes. Sir Robin has no hang up about his education while Sir Alan was snuffy about his old school mates: "It was not merely that they knew nothing of the people I knew, but their grandfathers had been county cricketers and mine were masters of the Bramham Moor hunt."

JASPER GERARD

'Clearing out the screen of last night's crop of useless, otiose and unintelligible e-mails is like mucking out the pigsty by hand'

Fools predicted that this age would be the end of the written word. Writing was about to be replaced by the more immediate media of voice-to-voice communication on personal mobile television and Internet waffle-and-video-ins. Wrong. More people are scribbling (usually illegibly) than ever before, for e-mail, personal publication and fax. And this popularisation of the written word is a democratic increment. But more has meant worse. Clearing the screen of last night's crop of useless, otiose and unintelligible e-mails is like mucking out the pigsty by hand not forklift, or even shovel.

This was also meant to be the end of the age of paper. We were going to live in homes and offices without paper, where we would communicate by electronic screen and voice. Wrong again. Ever vaster daily avalanches of

paper bury us at home and at work. I do not want the Royal Bank of Scotland to invent exciting new accounts that will win me discounts in restaurants, on foreign holidays and on accident insurance. Particularly I do not want them to waste my money on glossy and turgid packages (with "free gifts" of key-rings) advertising their new offer to longstanding and valued customers. Most particularly, I do not want Dalek Irish underpaid voices to cold-call me on the telephone to ask whether I have read the package. Who has time to read such a mountain of crap? It goes straight into the Moloch merry-go-round for recycling.

All that I want from my bank is that it puts up with my overdraft and does not humiliate me publicly at the hole-in-the-wall. The same, *mutatis mutandis* (an economical Latin phrase that deserves to be pre-

served, even by Philistine new lawyers) goes for insurance companies, the National Trust, British Telecom and all other firms that assume that punters have nothing better to do than to read their newsletters and special offers just for you. Mr Mug. They should stick to their last. The prose is so turgid and complacent that it must have been written by senior management. Like cinema companies, they are too mean and too thick to engage professionals to write their screenplays or special offer puffs.

Paper will tolerate anything. Even special offers to longstanding and valued customers written by the MD with the help of the chairman and a team of

Philip Howard

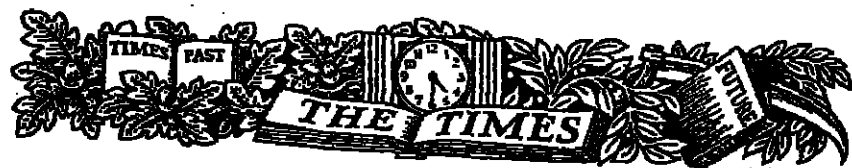


It is a bitter irony that while we moderns groan under this paper mountain, we are allowing some of the oldest and most interesting paper in the world to decay. As Richard Owen has reported for us, excavation of the lost Vesuvius library under Herculaneum has ceased. Funds have run out because of Italian political wrangling. One third of the villa has been excavated, producing near-

marketing advisers. American universities which deal in early drafts and casual words, while their university presses stop publishing poetry by living authors, would starve the horse to death and prize his turds. So our age suffers from a mountain of missed and unread paper.

There is gold in those old papers. Diggers have already found some Lucretius (confirming an emendation by Housman), Ennius and two acts of a comedy by Caecilius Statius (the Roman equivalent of Tom Stoppard). They are now

threatened by water flooding into the excavation, which looks like a gravel pit. They are threatened by fire. Vesuvius is not dead. It is spewing smoke and magma as alarmingly as it does in Ingres's portrait of Caroline Murat, Queen (if it needs one) of Naples. Archaeologists do not value old paper as much as the boat and Temple of the Muses they have found. But the charred paper under Herculaneum is literally priceless. If the Italians cannot raise the money to excavate it, the Getty Museum at Malibu (modelled on the Villa of the Papii) should pay for it. Or Unesco. Or the Royal Bank of Scotland. If they found poems by Virgil or Horace, the find would repay the excavation a million times. But this project is not about profit. Let us hope that the paper we leave for 4000AD contains more than special offers for valued customers.



THE BLAME GAME

Republicans distance themselves from a faltering peace

There is only one obvious response to the IRA's admission that renegade republicans have appropriated its weapons. Why weren't they decommissioned before? Throughout the peace process the IRA and Sinn Féin have insisted that requests for the decommissioning of illegal weapons were distractions. As long as political progress sustained their ceasefire, they argued, then Unionist concerns were mischievous and misplaced. But now we know that groups such as the dissidents behind the Omagh bombing were using material from IRA stockpiles. The republican objections to decommissioning were always an affront to democracy. Now, by the IRA's own admission, the refusal to decommission has led directly to the murder of innocents.

Why, then, did the IRA choose to make this announcement? The answer lies in the faltering progress of the peace process. Republicans realise the Good Friday Agreement is under strain, and they are responsible. The wave of recent punishment beatings, more properly thought of as targeted terrorist torture, has undermined faith in the willingness of paramilitaries to embrace democracy. The continued campaign of intimidation has stiffened Unionist resolve not to accept republican participation in Northern Ireland's new Government without decommissioning. Quite rightly, they object to sharing power with armed thugs whose answer to dissent is the cocked arm. The refusal of the IRA and loyalists to abandon the gun could bring the peace process to a stuttering halt.

Republicans are particularly desperate to avoid the culpability for such a failure. And yesterday's statement was a choreographed move in their dance away from blame. By announcing that its own weapons were in the hands of renegades which it claimed not to be able to control, the IRA sought to suggest that it could not

be held responsible for recent casualties. The statement was also calculated, paradoxically, to bolster the position of the Sinn Féin leadership by drawing attention to a weakness. Emphasising the existence, and offensive capacity, of dissident republicans makes it easier for Gerry Adams to argue that he cannot move too fast. Ask too much of me, he seeks to suggest, and these hotheads will go further.

The Government must be alive to the cynical intent behind the IRA's words. It can do so by making clear that there is no question where blame lies for Ulster's enduring misery. The IRA has, in the past, dealt ruthlessly with dissent and is manipulating the existence of "renegades" to escape its responsibilities. It cannot be allowed to evade responsibility for the use of its arms, and it must not be allowed to duck the requirement of decommissioning.

Ministers cannot wait upon events. Northern Ireland's new executive is due to be formed on March 10. There is no prospect of Unionist participation without a handover of IRA arms. Instead of calling upon all sides to make sacrifices, the Government should emphasise that the only real obstacle to progress is paramilitary obduracy. A moratorium on prisoner releases while the punishment beatings continue would be a suitable sign of resolution. Ministers would then carry greater conviction when they say, as they must, that no executive will be called into being until decommissioning begins.

Northern Ireland's First Minister-Designate, David Trimble, has travelled well in advance of his party to agree far-reaching changes which would grant nationalist Ireland an historically momentous role in the running of Ulster. He cannot be faulted for courage. If ministers refuse to lay the blame for the looming impasse at the IRA's door now then they must expect to share the responsibility for tragic failure.

CONVICTION POLITICS

The Senate will not benefit from an extended Clinton trial

There may be no exact American equivalent of the phrase "time to draw stumps" but with that sentiment the Senate should seek to conclude the trial of President Clinton. Senators are currently engaged in a series of debates and votes that will decide whether their inquiry ends next week or continues for an unknown duration. Testimony has been taken from Monica Lewinsky, Vernon Jordan and Sidney Blumenthal and the video-tape has been seen by every member of the Senate. There is no reason to believe that any vital new material has emerged nor that more would if the exercise were repeated on the floor of the chamber. The Senate should come to a decision.

This is not to suggest that Mr Clinton's lawyers have produced compelling arguments that he is innocent of perjury or obstruction of justice. The managers from the House of Representatives outlined a powerful case against the President. The defence of Mr Clinton consisted of the claim that the charges he faced were "vague" and that he might have perjured himself in the original Paula Jones case but not in the grand jury appearance that is formally cited in the articles of impeachment. Beyond that, the White House has sought to contrast the gender and racial diversity of its legal team with the uniformly white, male, conservative House prosecutors — as if this had the remotest relevance to Mr Clinton's legal standing.

Nor has it been demonstrated that the case against the President falls short of the "high crimes and misdemeanours" required for his conviction. In the 1980s Senators expelled three federal judges from the bench on the issue of perjury. In one case, the individual concerned had actually been acquitted at the criminal trial in which his allegedly false evidence was

submitted. In another, Harry Claiborne lost his position in 1986 for knowingly understating his income on a tax return. One Senator said then that "an individual guilty of such reprehensible conduct ought not to be permitted to exercise the awesome powers which the Constitution entrusts to (him)." Al Gore appears to have changed his mind on such matters 13 years later.

There is no reason in theory why a President and federal judge should be treated differently. In political practice, however, critical distinctions exist between them. There is but one President and that individual is elected by the entire nation. The framers of the American Constitution did not design and did not desire a presidency based on direct democratic selection. This, though, is the nature of the institution that the Senate today faces. Kenneth Starr has put forward the material against Mr Clinton; Congress has provided it a very prominent platform; Americans have chosen to spurn every single opportunity to endorse it.

A further extension of this trial will not alter anything. The votes do not exist to convict Mr Clinton. It may be, should be, upsetting for Republicans to see the words of George Washington upstaged by the opinion polls of George Gallup. They must nonetheless prepare an exit strategy. This should not be a "finding of the facts" motion that deems Mr Clinton guilty but keeps him in the Oval Office. That device is blatantly unconstitutional. If a majority of Senators does not want to award Mr Clinton the undue satisfaction of an acquittal then they should adjourn his trial indefinitely. Mr Starr will have his chance to pursue the President in the criminal courts but would be wise to wait until his term is completed. The Senate should decide to leave him to it.

WOMEN'S ROCK

A chance to meet the Casanovas of the crofts

When the Romans were languishing for want of womenfolk they adopted blunt tactics: they swiped their neighbours' wives and unsuspecting Sabines found themselves seized from their ringside seats as they sat admiring the gladiatorial games. What proved a perfectly effective method for the ancients sits ill at ease with modern tastes. Less bellicose populations must adopt more diplomatic methods. And the lonesome inhabitants of Scotland's Outer Isles, where men enormously outnumber women, have turned to EU bureaucrats instead. A European Community grant of some £700,000 is being made to lure women to the Hebrides.

The sparse, windswept landscapes of North Uist and the adjoining Benbecula support a scattered and scanty population. The traditional crofter's or fisherman's life is harsh. Working days are long and lonely, social life is limited and usually based around the copious consumption of alcohol. There are only basic supply shops and no cinema. The weekly shopping must be wheeled by barrow across boggy moors. Although outsiders may find this remoteness quaint or romantic, those brought up to such rigour find it small alarm.

Girls who leave school and travel to the mainland for further education are being lured by the city. Others see marriage to

an outsider — to soldiers from the Benbecula barracks, or holidaymakers, even — as a passport to freedom. And with a dwindling female population, a traditional mode of life will eventually wither and disappear as it did on St Kilda which, evacuated in the 1930s, is now home only to the puffins and fulmars which nest on its steep cliffs.

The proposed EU grant to North Uist and Benbecula is intended to coax new businesses to the islands, or tempt already established ones to relocate. Women will be especially encouraged to take up the proffered funds. Advances in technology make some schemes increasingly viable. Whether mainland incomers will be tempted into wedlock by an army of raddled bachelors is unlikely. The shy Casanovas of the crofts will first have to update their ideas about sexual equality. Many contemporary women will not be prepared to stay meekly at home attending to the crowdie and the cows, washing, cooking and rearing children, while the menfolk down drams in the nearest pub. But, if an EU grant succeeds in attracting not only women but whole families to these rocky outcrops, it will have fulfilled its most valuable purpose, a relevant and diverse economy where a community now dwindles and dies.

Mayhem in Ulster police no-go areas

From Mr James Bell

Sir, Martin Fletcher reports today on Vincent McKenna, another former IRA man who has turned away from violence and now faces injury, possibly death, at the hands of his former comrades. The Times is right to highlight his story, and that of Sean O'Callaghan who finds himself in the same dreadful situation (article, January 26).

There is irony — yet also, I believe, hope — in the fact that I, an ex-pat Ulster Protestant, can find myself in total accord with the perceptions, hopes and fears of ex-IRA activists.

That such concordance between us — and, I suspect, many tens of thousands of so-called ordinary people in Northern Ireland — should be in any way surprising is simply another aspect of the general indifference towards affairs in Ulster that most UK citizens and most politicians exhibit daily. We are all tired of the anodyne reporting of the starts and stops of the so-called "peace process".

It is beyond belief that Messrs Adams and McGuinness can plead a "policing vacuum" as the cause of the barbarous thuggery being practised on both sides of the sectarian divide. Were it to be more widely known in the rest of the UK, where there are no no-go areas, that there are places in Ulster where our police force is afraid (or forbidden) to go, there would be public outrage.

Why do our political masters not only tolerate this situation, but now actively condone it by letting yet more thugs loose every day?

It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that this Government is more concerned with its footnote in history as having, at last, solved the "Irish problem". Well, history is a harsh judge and may well conclude that Blair's Government succumbed to the threats and blandishments of a bunch of gangsters, and left the vast majority of the citizens of Ulster as forgotten citizens of the United Kingdom.

I remain, your obedient, if perplexed servant,
JAMES BELL,
26 Parson's Mead,
Flax Bourdon, Bristol BS48 1UH.
February 4.

Institutional racism

From Canon Ivor Smith-Cameron

Sir, The Metropolitan Police Service has been accused of institutional racism (letters, January 30). Sir Paul Condon, the Commissioner, refused to accept that charge at the Stephen Lawrence inquiry last July, although he as good as admits to it in his interview today with Vanessa Bennett: "Is there racism in the police? Yes. Is it more than a few bad apples? Yes."

As a member of the Church of England I have long believed it to suffer from institutional racism, and this has spurred me to work to eradicate this blemish. I do not believe that my loyalty and devotion to the Church and her members have been impaired.

Unless we acknowledge what is wrong with us it is impossible to be able to do anything about it. Acknowledging a fault in an institution does not necessarily imply any disloyalty to its members.

Yours sincerely,
IVOR SMITH-CAMERON
(Chaplain to Her Majesty the Queen),
100 Prince of Wales Drive, SW11 4BD.
February 2.

Police commended

From Dr Muriel G. Yates

Sir, Last week, as the mother of one of the commended officers, I had the privilege of attending the Metropolitan Police Assistant Commissioner's commendation ceremony, 2 Area (North West). It was a delightful family occasion, with an air of informality mixed with the seriousness of the event.

As I listened to the reading of the citations listing the devotion to duty, professionalism, and sheer bravery of these young officers, all going far beyond the call of duty, I asked myself why we do not hear more about these things. Why is it always the mistakes and misdemeanours of the very few which reach the press and television?

I felt very proud that day, and extremely grateful to all these men and women in our police forces throughout the country who contribute so much to making Britain a better and safer place to live in.

Yours sincerely,
MURIEL G. YATES,
7 Church Gardens, Ealing, W5 4HH.
January 27.

Euro 'target date'

From Mr Neil Kinnock

Sir, I haven't "called on the Government to set a target date for joining the euro" (report, January 30). In answer to questions about Mr Alan Donnelly's proposal to that effect, I've said that his call was a good way of stimulating debate but that, apart from its unlikelihood, the practicality of such a stratagem was very doubtful.

Yours,
NEIL KINNOCK,
The European Commission,
Rue de la Loi 200, B-1049 Brussels.
February 1.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Karma and the judgment of God

From the Reverend Canon John Halliburton,
Chancellor of St Paul's Cathedral

Sir, For reasons not fully understood by most of us, Glenn Hoddle has resorted to the wisdom of the East in order to answer that eternal question, why do the innocent suffer (letters, February 1, 3 and 4).

He has chosen the well-known path, which attributes human suffering to human misconduct, a position taken up by Job's three friends as recorded in the Old Testament, but which was seriously challenged by Job's contemporaries and by many after him. Belief in retribution in this life consequent upon failures in a previous existence certainly does not belong to the contemporary Christianity to which Mr Hoddle is said to have become committed.

Those of us who have lived through the memories of the Holocaust and the horrors of modern genocide and the abuse of human rights will know that belief in the goodness of God and the ultimate purpose of creation has been seriously damaged by those who have adopted the view that human suffering is the consequence of human sin.

Millions today now do not believe in God because he did not come to the rescue of the victims of Auschwitz, nor does he seem to visit the torture camps of Latin America and beyond.

It would appear that Hoddle has no theology of the God who suffers beside us, goes with us into the prison yards of South America. His God is, apparently, not the Christ of Calvary, only the God who sits in judgment and condemns people for their weakness and their indiscretions.

Whom would your readers choose? The Christ of Calvary who loves the penitent thief, or the Judge who condemns his victims to a wheelchair and tells them that it is their fault that they cannot walk?

Yours faithfully,
JOHN HALLIBURTON,
Chancellor,
St Paul's Cathedral,
1 Amen Court, EC4M 7BU.
jyh69@dia1.pipex.com
February 4.

Hoddle trouble

From Mr Michael Varcoe-Cocks

Sir, You report today that Glenn Hoddle publicly admitted making a "serious error of judgment" that had caused pain to a number of people, for which he apologised, and (later editions) that he "is now expected to receive a £500,000 payoff, representing the remaining 18 months of his contract".

If this "serious error of judgment" was a breach of his contract with the FA, it is completely unacceptable that the FA is considering paying him what he would have received under his contract had he stayed.

If it was not a breach of his contract, those running the FA are even more incompetent than they have appeared from the past few years.

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL VARCOE-COCKS,
5 Brackenbury Road, W6 0BE.
February 3.

From Mr Don Bradbury

Sir, Half a million pounds for doing nothing for 18 months: nice work if you can get it. My word, how badly we treat our failures in this country. Hoddle couldn't have organised it better if he'd tried.

Yours faithfully,
DON BRADBURY,
6 Sahway Rise, Dronfield Woodhouse,
Sheffield S18 8ZR.

From Mrs Tricia Morgan

Sir, As an American, I hold the free-

Winter fuel payments

From Dr Gary Kitchen

Sir, Sally Levett (letter, January 23) is right to suggest that elderly people would be reluctant to take winter fuel payments from the State if left to claim for themselves. This resistance is very marked in relation to means-tested benefits such as income support, where up to a million pensioners do not claim their entitlement.

There is more at stake here than simple pride. The decline of the pension is an important factor in fuel poverty. In our experience pensioners believe it to be wrong that the basic state pension has been allowed to dwindle over the years against average earnings, to the extent that, in April, for a single pensioner it will be far below the income support level of £75. What was the point in their making a lifetime of national insurance contributions if not to earn the right to an adequate basic pension on retirement? And how can a pension level below the poverty safety net be thought adequate?

Our view is that the basic pension level should be raised in April to at least the income support personal allowance, as a first step towards rectifying this injustice.

Yours sincerely,
GARY KITCHEN
(National Organiser),
National Pensioners Convention,
47 Chalton Street, NW1 1HY.
pensioners@compuserve.com
January 25.

From Mr Ganesh Lall

Sir, Karma is the spiritual equivalent of the physical law of cause and effect. In the exercise of free will each individual, and no one else, is held responsible for the consequences of his or her action. God does not enter the equation.

Hinduism does not believe in sin and punishment, only in errors and the correction of errors. It is not judgemental. Hindu belief in karma is on all fours with the Judaic religions: where it parts company is in extending the belief to govern the progress of preceding and succeeding lives. This is consistent with the belief of Hindus in the spiritual evolution of the soul until it becomes one with the Universal Spirit in the state of Nirvana.

Incidentally, karma represents progress, not regression. Humans do not come back as animals, only with some of their traits.

I am, yours respectfully,
GANESH LALL,
7 Burrow Walk, SE21 8LY.

From Professor Ian Markham

Sir, It is important to distinguish between Hoddle's view of disability and the belief in reincarnation and karma that underpinned it. Plenty of Hindus would want to dissociate themselves from the former but affirm the latter.

In our increasingly diverse society, it would be outrageous to end up with a situation in which a Hindu could not be appointed as England coach.

Sincerely,
IAN MARKHAM
(Liverpool Professor of Theology and Public Life),
Liverpool Hope University College,
Hope Park, Liverpool L16 9JT.
February 1.

From Dr L. L. Katan

Sir, If football can become a religion (as it has), why should not religion become a political football?

Yours,
LEO KATAN,
14 Ingram House, Park Road,
Hampton Wick, Surrey KT1 4BA.
February 2.

dom of speech to be one of the most fundamental of human rights. I find it astonishing — frightening, really — that I am living in a land where someone can be sacked for expressing his religious beliefs.

It is just such intolerance in this country that led to the founding of my own nation. I am dismayed to find that such attitudes still prevail.

Yours sincerely,
TRICIA MORGAN,
44 Peppard Road, Maidenbower,
Crawley, West Sussex RH10 7QS.
lem.morgan@btinternet.com
February 2.

From Ms Belinda Hayer-Hames

Sir, It is extraordinary that the only people allowed complete freedom of speech nowadays are the media.

Yours faithfully,
BELINDA HAYER-HAMES,
5 Moray Place, Edinburgh EH3 6DS.
February 3.

From Mr Ken Broad

Sir, I was astounded to read some of the things Howard Wilkinson said yesterday, as reported by Matt Dickinson in your sports pages today.

Just how much longer do we have to put up with this man as caretaker manager of the England team? Surely the time has come for him to go — and go quickly I say!

Yours sincerely,
KEN BROAD,
Manor Court, Church Aston,
Newport, Shropshire TF10 9JJ.
February 4.

From Sir Ronald McIntosh

Sir, I imagine that the great majority of better-off pensioners will applaud Professor Elkan's suggestion (letter, January 16) that they should pass on to an appropriate charity the winter fuel payments they receive from the Department of Social Security. Some already do this: probably many more support the idea in principle but for one reason or another do not get around to doing anything about it.

Before making winter fuel payments the department sends every pensioner a letter giving details of the amount involved and other relevant information. I hope that on the next occasion it may be willing to give pensioners who feel they do not need the payment the option to ask for it to be paid instead to a charitable fund which can ensure that it reaches those who do.

I am sure that the established charities for the elderly would be glad to administer such a scheme, which could attract a substantial sum of money every winter. It would certainly give more effective help to those in need than the present arrangement does, at no extra cost to the taxpayer.

Yours faithfully,
RONALD MCINTOSH,
24 Ponsbury Terrace, SW1P 4QA.
January 24.

Letters should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be faxed to 0171-782 5046.
e-mail to: letters@the-times.co.uk

Minimum wage threat to charities

From the Reverend David Weekes

Sir, The National Minimum Wage Act comes into force in just over two months' time. I write to publicise the plight of young people who are engaged by charities as volunteer workers.

As well as nationals, young people from overseas have been able to enjoy an experience of working for a charity in Britain for up to one year through a long-standing concession outside the immigration rules.

Unless the present draft regulations are suitably amended, this kind of opportunity will no longer be economically viable. The Act will not allow us to continue with our present residential remuneration package in cash and kind (which is exactly tailored to this kind of opportunity). The total value of such emoluments is already in excess of what will be required in cash by the NMW.

Moreover, the Act would actually force us to pay such workers a package with a total value of around 50 per cent above the NMW, since although it is greatly to their advantage that our volunteer workers must be residential the regulations only allow a deduction for payments in kind of £20 per week for accommodation.

It is not practical for us to give our volunteers less benefit in kind than accommodation, heat, light and all meals and snacks. We calculate that the present cash value of this is about £85 per week. Unless the regulations are amended, the Act will effectively require us to pay each volunteer the value of such benefits worth at least £65 per week on top of the NMW.

Many charities are in jeopardy because of an Act which was presumably intended to address completely different issues. Members of religious communities may be equally at risk for similar reasons. Certainly au pairs seem to be adversely affected (letters, January 27 and 30).

Yours faithfully,
DAVID WEEKES
(Warden), Lee Abbey
International Students' Club,
57-67 Lexham Gardens, W8 6JJ.
January 30.

'Grey-power' cars

From Mr Stirling Moss

Sir, I was surprised to read (January 27) that I am helping to build the first motor car designed for the ageing driver. I must apologise to your reporter for the confusion I appear to have caused him with regard to my involvement in this research project.

I was happy to be asked by the Institution of Mechanical Engineers to help them draw attention to the launch of a programme they are funding at Sunderland University into the research of automotive ergonomics for the older driver. In a year's time, I hope I will again be present when they report on their findings.

Ageing drivers are a population group that is growing — both numerically and as a proportion of overall road users — and, as such, the merits of taking a measured approach to meet their changing needs are obvious. Adjusting aspects of car access, seating, controls, instruments and outside view could assist in making cars easier, more comfortable and, above all, safer to drive.

At no time would I suggest that sports cars should be turned into invalid carriages; only that mainstream models should take account of the older driver, ultimately to the benefit of us all. Like it or not, if not there already, inevitably we will all, one day, become that "older driver".

Yours faithfully,
STIRLING MOSS,
46 Shepherd Street, W1Y 8JN.
January 28.

Near miss

From Mr Alfred Brendel, Hon KBE

Sir, According to your paper (January 30), Goethe, whose 250th birthday anniversary is celebrated by the "Teutonic world" (read: the German-speaking countries), was a "near-genius".

May I suggest that you call Richard III a near-villain, and the earthquake in Colombia a near-disaster?

Yours etc,
ALFRED BRENDL,
c/o Ingpen & Williams,
26 Wadham Road, SW15 2LR.
February 1.

Knot rated

From Professor Ian Fells

Sir, I was disappointed that your article on ties ("Does a bit of cloth round the neck still inspire respect?", February 1) made no mention of bow-ties. I have worn one ever since I was a research student when a normal tie tended to fall into my experimental equipment. I have since introduced them to my surgeon friends who do not like to get blood on their ties when dealing with emergencies.

The only downside is the assumption, occasionally made by TV interviewers and the like, that one is either an architect or a Liberal Democrat or both.

Yours faithfully,
IAN FELLS,
29 Rectory Terrace,
Newcastle upon Tyne NE3 1YB.
February 1.

Forthcoming marriages



...and the

1990

[illegible]

TRADE; 0171 481 1982
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PERSONAL

FARESAVERS

DELTA
WORLDWIDE

Valentine's

WOMEN

OBITUARIES

RENFORD BAMBROUGH

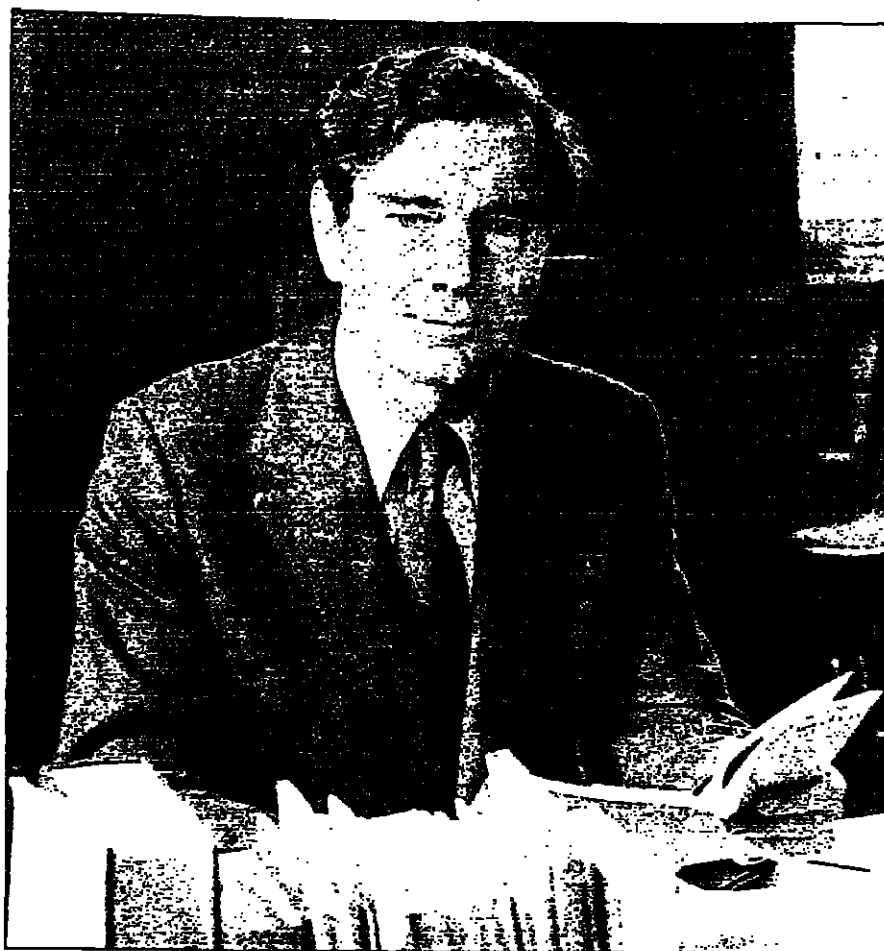
Renford Bambrough, Cambridge philosopher, died on January 17 aged 72. He was born on April 29, 1926.

A FELLOW of St John's College, Cambridge, for nearly 50 years, Renford Bambrough began as a classicist in ancient philosophy and became a philosopher in the tradition of Russell, Moore and Wittgenstein.

John Renford Bambrough was born into a mining background in Silksworth, County Durham, where his father was an electrician in the local colliery. After grammar school he was conscripted as a Bevin Boy to work at Wearmouth Colliery in 1944. He went from there to St John's as an undergraduate, subsequently succeeding in the fierce postwar competition for places and fellowships to study further study and follow an academic career. He became a college fellow in 1950.

He began with Plato, Aristotle and the pre-Socratics, with a powerful essay on Plato's *Republic*, *Plato's Political Analogies*, which was reprinted in *Plato, Power and Politics* (1967). But his assiduous attendance at the Cambridge Moral Sciences Club had brought him into contact with Ludwig Wittgenstein and with philosophers from the United States and other parts of the English-speaking world who were drawn to Wittgenstein. Although Bambrough was a university lecturer in classics from 1957, his focus of attention had already switched to consideration of philosophical questions, often illustrated by references to Aristotle and more occasionally to Plato, before he became a university lecturer in moral sciences in 1966.

Bambrough came to believe that



Wittgenstein's later work, for all its dismissal of philosophical theories such as those in his own *Tractatus*, provided the material for demonstrating that philosophical knowledge was indeed knowledge: capable of reaching truth, with justification and reason. Little published material about the later Wittgenstein existed in the 1950s, but the feeling of a powerful oral tradition was heady matter for those

who attended Bambrough's lectures and John Wisdom's tea-parties at Causewayside. Bambrough was an inspirational rationalist. He believed that there was objectivity in philosophy, ethics, aesthetics, and politics, as there was in science and mathematics, and he approvingly quoted Aristotle's view that accuracy was important for the carpenter and the geometer, but

was to be construed differently in the two cases.

Bambrough's influential paper *Universals and Family Resemblances* (1961) developed such notions, beginning from a celebrated passage in Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*. There followed a series of important articles, including *Principia Metaphysica* (1964), *Unanswerable Questions* (1966), and *Aristotle on Justice: A Paradigm of Philosophy* (1965), and books, too: *Reason, Truth and God* (1969), based on his Stanton lectures, and *Moral Scepticism and Moral Knowledge* (1979). Bambrough's philosophical work was rooted in commonsense and common understanding. That, and his unfailing intellectual rigour, made him a distinguished editor of *Philosophy* from 1973 to 1994.

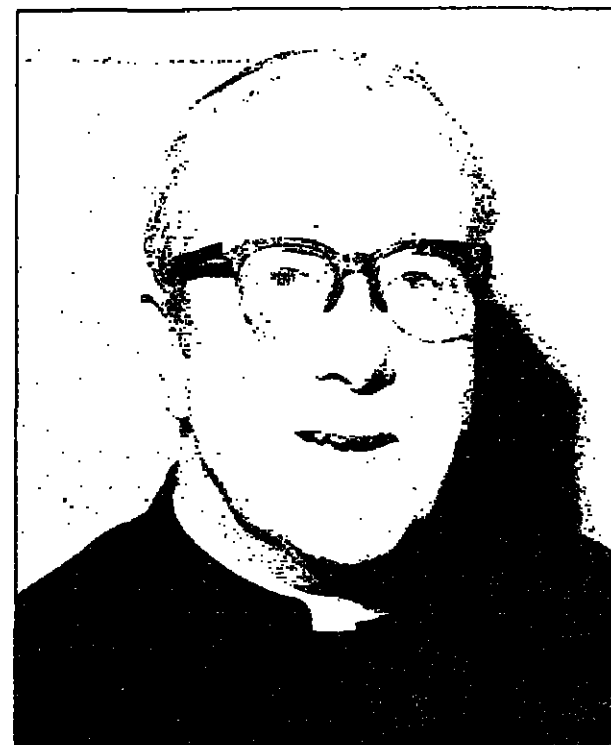
A wonderful teacher, he inspired generations of students, many of whom aspired to his calm rationality in worlds remote from professional philosophy. His mien was often impassive; his lack of mannerism sometimes seemed itself a mannerism. When he chose to be, he was wickedly witty, the centre of humour and reputedly lucky at poker.

He was an important figure at St John's, as Dean (1964-79) and then President (1979-83). He also served on numerous university bodies and as chairman of the governors of Sedburgh School.

But he was, perhaps, too extraordinary and controversial a figure to reach the administrative pinnacles. His last years were marred by a degenerative neurological condition, Lewy Body disease, which, like Alzheimer's disease, deprived him of thought, reason and speech. His wife and four children, to whom he was devoted, cared for him compassionately, and so, at the end, did his nurses.

THE RIGHT REV PATRICK CASEY

The Right Rev Patrick Casey, Bishop of Brentwood, 1969-79, died on January 26 aged 85. He was born on November 20, 1913.



PATRICK CASEY was one of the first Roman Catholic bishops in England to be appointed on the recommendation of his clergy and parishioners. In the summer of 1969 a survey was circulated in the Brentwood diocese asking priests and laity who they would like to see take up the reins on the departure of Bishop Ward. While the clergy favoured a figure who would work closely with them, others in the diocese replied that they wanted a "relatively progressive" character. Unsurprisingly, Casey's name featured prominently among the candidates.

The method of Casey's appointment was in many respects in tune with the philosophy of the Second Vatican Council, four years before. It satisfied the wishes of those within and without the hierarchy who believed that the time had come for bishops who would work in a more consultative and sympathetic manner.

Casey was not a specialist theologian but an enthusiastic and accessible figure who had made a name for himself for his unobtrusive work among the poor and in nursing homes and clinics while Provost of Westminster Cathedral Chapter in the previous three years.

Wryly remarking that the diocese of Brentwood would never be happy with anything less than a saint, Casey said he would stay for only ten years. Bound to his word, he duly stepped down in December 1979.

Patrick Casey was born in North London of Irish stock, and was ordained into the priesthood by Cardinal Hinsley in June 1939, whereupon he became assistant priest at St James's, Spanish Place, for more than 20 years. After two-and-a-half years as parish priest of Hendon, he was appointed Vicar General of the Westminster archdiocese in December 1963. The following year he was made a domestic prelate and a canon of Westminster Cathedral. He was consecrated bishop of Brentwood by Cardinal Heenan in 1969.

nan in 1966 and became one of the auxiliary bishops at Westminster.

During his tenure of the diocese of Brentwood (which covers the bulk of Essex) Casey ensured an adherence to the spirit of the Second Vatican Council, establishing commissions on liturgy and justice and peace.

However, he had first to deal with the thorny problem of whether or not to enlarge the existing cathedral, the church of St Anthony of Padua, at a cost of £125,000. A minority opposed the idea, pointing out that this sum might be more appropriately spent on overseas aid and charity. Casey insisted, however, maintaining that the old structure was insufficient for its needs, and the extension was eventually built — an extension which has since been augmented by a more impressive, classical structure.

When Cardinal Heenan died in 1975, Casey as Bishop of Brentwood acted as the principal celebrant at the funeral. For many years he was Episcopal Secretary of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.

Upon his resignation in 1979, Casey became apostolic administrator, before the eventual appointment of Bishop

Thomas McMahon. In 1980 he once again took up the role of parish priest, this time at the fashionable church of Our Most Holy Redeemer and St Thomas More in Chelsea. He retired to Leigh-on-Sea in September 1989, where he lived next door to his local church, playing an active role in parish life, though in recent years he had been afflicted by psoriasis and arthritis, which made it painful for him to kneel or genuflect.

As a bishop, Casey was comfortable popular with his clergy and congregations: he would often celebrate Mass in a church where the local priest was ill or absent. Despite his ostensibly liberal stance, he was opposed to any suggestion of women priests. After the Church of England voted to allow the ordination of women in 1992, Casey became a champion of the so-called "Roman Option", intended to bring Anglican clergy into the Catholic priesthood. One of the beneficiaries of the idea was Bishop Graham Leonard, the former Anglican Bishop of London. Asked on his 80th birthday whether women would ever be ordained in the Catholic Church, Casey remarked: "I do not think it will happen in my lifetime, thank God."

ALEXANDER COOKE

Alexander Cooke, physician, died on January 6 aged 99. He was born on October 17, 1899.

ALEX COOKE liked to recall that as a medical student he was instructed in the application of leeches. Yet he was sympathetic to modern ideas, and in his nineties he attended lectures on molecular medicine.

He came from a long-lived family. His father could remember the funeral of the Duke of Wellington, and one of his sisters just beat him by living to be 100. At Merton College, Oxford, he was an avuncular and clubbable character. But his modesty disguised a sharp intellect, and he was influential in instigating changes in an essentially conservative profession, notably at the Royal College of Physicians.

Alexander Macdougall Cooke was educated at Merchant Taylors' School, Oxford University and St Thomas' Hospi-

tal. Before taking up an exhibition at Jesus College he served in the Royal Fusiliers and Royal Flying Corps during the last two years of the First World War. In 1920 he secured a first in animal physiology and was at once employed as a demonstrator in the Department of Physiology. At St Thomas' he was awarded the Mead Medal in clinical medicine and pathology, while at the same time tutoring in physiology at Jesus. He qualified in 1923 and then held a succession of appointments at St Thomas', finally becoming deputy director of the medical unit. In 1933 he left London and was appointed May Reader in Medicine at Oxford, so beginning a long association with the Radcliffe Infirmary, where he became a physician in 1938.

The onset of the Second World War placed a great strain on hospital resources in



Oxford, where medical students were evacuated from London to complete their clinical training. As clinical sub-dean, Cooke set about organising the teaching with quiet efficiency, and his success encouraged the formation of an undergraduate clinical school in Oxford, to be grafted onto the postgraduate school endowed by Lord Nuffield. In 1942 Cooke was elected to

a fellowship at Merton, an honour he valued above all others. The dinner parties he and his wife Vera gave in their house on the Woodstock Road, where members of the medical profession met dons, helped to ease the absorption of the clinical school into the life of the university.

After the war Cooke became increasingly involved in the affairs of the Royal College of Physicians. He had been elected to the fellowship in 1935 and was for many years an examiner for its membership. He also gave the Lumsden and Langdon-Brown lectures. During his time as censor and senior censor, in the 1950s, he brought his considerable influence to bear in encouraging the college to move from the ornate but inappropriate building in Trafalgar Square to Denys Lasdun's splendid new building in Regent's Park. This move, more than any-

thing else, enabled the college to change from an inward-looking body to an institution with a wide-ranging concern for continuing postgraduate medical education.

Perhaps his most important contribution to education was the training of a series of house physicians and registrars who subsequently became distinguished in their own right. His interest in training was also manifest during the ten years he served as Oxford University's representative on the General Medical Council.

Standing at over 6ft, he was always well-dressed and set high standards for himself in personal and professional behaviour, which he expected others to follow. He was well known in the hospital for remonstrating with anyone, be it porter or professor, who was walking along the corridor whistling or with hands in his pockets.

Yet he was completely unpretentious, and his sternness was relieved by a self-deprecating humour and a refreshing lack of ambition for personal gain.

He was for 13 years secretary to the editors of the *Quarterly Journal of Medicine* and then an editor himself for a further 14 years. He also contributed many papers to medical journals. In 1966 he retired from the National Health Service, and in 1972 he published the third volume of the *History of the Royal College of Physicians*, a meticulous work of scholarship. At the age of 92 he wrote a delightful autobiography, *The Cooke's Tale*. A man of wide culture, he sang in the Bach Choir, had a great interest in architecture and was a connoisseur of bookplates.

He married Vera Lea in 1928 and enjoyed a supremely happy family life. His wife died in 1984, but being fiercely independent he insisted on living alone in his house, surrounded by travel widely and remained a familiar and much loved figure on high table at Merton. He was predeceased by one of his daughters, but is survived by his son and two daughters.

PERSONAL COLUMN

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PUBLIC NOTICES

NOTICE PUBLISHED BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE UNDER SECTION 7(7) OF THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS ACT 1984

The Secretary of State hereby gives notice as follows.

1. He intends to revoke, later in the year, the Class Licence to run Telecommunications Systems for the Provision of Satellite Telecommunication Services (issued 2 August 1991), the Class Licence for the Running of Telecommunication Systems by Broadcasters to Receive Messages from Earth Orbiting Apparatus (issued 15 January 1991), the Class Licence to Run Sound Broadcasting Systems (issued 31 December 1990), the Class Licence to Run Radio Transmission Systems for the Purposes of Controlling and Monitoring Television and Cable Relay Systems (issued 12 December 1991) and the Class Licence to Run Community Television Relay Systems (issued 31 December 1990) which were granted by the Secretary of State under section 7 of the Telecommunications Act and to issue new licences. The licences will be for a period of 25 years subject to earlier revocation in circumstances specified in the licences.
2. Various amendments have been made to the licences to bring the conditions and definitions into line with the requirements of the EC Licensing Directive (97/13/EC), and for other reasons. The draft licences have been examined to ensure the conditions are consistent with those set out in the Annex to the EC Licensing Directive and that each condition satisfies the EC Licensing Directive's requirements to be transparent, non-discriminatory, proportionate and objective. New conditions have been included in the licences on Fair Trading and Access Control services. Various other minor or consequential amendments will be made to the licences to update and standardise the conditions and definitions.
3. Representations or objections may be made in respect of the proposed new licences. They should be made in writing by 5 March 1999 and addressed to the undersigned at the Department of Trade and Industry, Communications & Information Industries Directorate, Room 2.79, 151 Buckingham Palace Road, London SW1W 9SS. Copies of the proposed licences can be obtained free of charge by writing to the Department or by calling 0171 215 1746.

Simon Moseley
Department of Trade and Industry

5 February 1999

AUSTRALIAN CADETS ON THIS DAY

February 5, 1925

Despite the somewhat prim tone of the report, the atmosphere was said to be informal at all times. The occasional splitting up of the party was not surprising, for there were 140 cadets.

of Connaught would be as anxious as himself that they should have a happy and instructive time. As the lads marched past him in single file the Prince shook hands cordially with each one, and asked a number of questions. The band brought up the rear, and the Prince had quite a long talk with Geoffrey Bryne, the 12 year old drum-major, who is only 3ft 8in high, and is the smallest member of the party. The Prince briefly addressed the

party, saying: "I sincerely hope that you may have a happy time here and that you will enjoy your visit to the Old Country as much as I enjoyed my visit to Australia. That is saying a great deal for nothing could have been better."

Earlier in the day a party of the cadets visited the A.E.C. motor works at Walthamstow, while the remainder went to the Science Museum at South Kensington. After the ceremony at St James's Palace the boys were driven to Lambeth Palace where they received a very hearty welcome from the Archbishop of Canterbury and Mrs Randall Davidson. The Archbishop told the cadets that his Palace was one of the very few really old houses left in London. He trusted that they would return home believing that the people of this country had great faith in the future of Australia. The visitors were entertained to tea at the Royal Colonial Institute by Lord Burnham. In the evening half the cadets visited the Savoy Theatre and witnessed a performance of *The Sport of Kings*; the remainder were the guests of the Overseas League...

NEWS

Ailing Hussein flies home

A critically ill King Hussein was last night flying back to his vulnerable desert kingdom in an apparent bid to die on home soil after the drastic failure of a second bone marrow transplant to secure remission in his lethal lymphatic cancer.

"The great fear of everyone here is that the King is rushing home to die among his people and not on foreign turf," a former Jordanian diplomat said. Pages 1, 15

Base rate cut deals blow to savers

Savers were dealt a blow yesterday by the fifth successive monthly cut in the Bank of England base rate from 6.0 per cent to 5.5 per cent. The Bank's unexpected decision to trim base rates was greeted with widespread acclaim by business and union leaders. Mortgage lending rates were cut to their lowest levels for 30 years. Page 1

Diana patent bid fails

An attempt by the family and memorial fund of Diana, Princess of Wales, to turn her face into a trademark, has been rejected by the Patent Office. Page 1

RAC deal called off

Some 12,000 members of the Royal Automobile Club who had been banking on a £34,000 windfall from selling RAC Motoring Services to Cadant had their pay-outs cancelled when the deal was called off. Page 1

Lords, 75, face axe

Life peers over 75, such as Baroness Thatcher and Lord Callaghan of Cardiff, face expulsion from a reformed House of Lords under plans for a mandatory retirement age. Page 2

Island wives wanted

Remote Hebridean island communities, known locally as bachelor country, are to receive European funding to attract potential wives to the area. Page 5

Dilemma for rider

A talented disabled rider is considering having her arm amputated to comply with a rule change banning her from top-level dressage competitions. Page 6

Channel 4 faces fine

Channel 4 is facing a substantial fine after admitting that a documentary about young male prostitutes contained scenes that were faked. Page 8

Home boasts durable foundations

The buyer of 29 Balgait in Lincoln will get a slice of Roman history as well as a three-storey family home. The house boasts four giant pillars, part of the remains of a first-century Roman civic centre, as well as a section of road believed to have been built between York and London by the Romans after they arrived in the area about 42BC. Page 13

Percy's garden plan

The Duchess of Northumberland is seeking £15 million in sponsorship to help create one of the most spectacular gardens on the planet at Alnwick Castle. Page 11

Tories' marriage vow

William Hague has promised to use the tax and benefit system to support the institution of marriage. Page 12

Fresh IOC scandal

Kim Un Yong, the Korean Olympic official tipped as the next president of the IOC, came under fresh pressure to step down when it was revealed that Salt Lake City had got his son a job. Page 14

Nato prepares forces

Nato is planning to send five brigades into Kosovo, with a 5,000-man strategic reserve force in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. If a peace deal is signed in Rambouillet. Page 17

Mercenaries revolt

French mercenaries are in revolt over their lack of work and what they say is the failure of their leaders to pay them for the few missions that have come their way in recent years. Page 18

Bank in Nazi scandal

Deutsche Bank, Germany's largest commercial bank, was thrust into the midst of a new Nazi era scandal, casting a shadow over its planned \$10-billion takeover of Bankers Trust. Page 19



Bill and Hillary Clinton, pictured at a prayer breakfast in Washington, have attacked a *People* cover story about their daughter, Chelsea. Page 16

BUSINESS

Rover sham: Longbridge

Rover's car plant, has already been abandoned by its parent BMW, according to senior Rover insiders who have branded the high-profile £2 billion package a sham. Page 27

Stakis talks: Ladbroke

Stakis talks: Ladbroke, the hotel and gaming group, is in talks to acquire Stakis, its Glasgow-based rival, in a £1.5 billion deal. Page 27

Goldman payout

The partners of Goldman Sachs may exclude most employees from a share windfall when it again attempts to float on the US stock market. Page 27

Markets: The FTSE 100 index

Markets: The FTSE 100 index fell 0.40 points to 5939.9. The pound fell 0.02 cents to \$1.6380 but rose 0.33p against the euro to 68.93p. The sterling index rose to 100.6 from 100.3. Page 30

SPORT

Football: A sub-committee

will be formed next week to discuss the contenders for the job of England manager, and David Davies, the acting chief executive, will have a large say in the appointment. Page 52

Boddy: Howard Clarke

Boddy: Howard Clarke, a journeyman boxer from the West Midlands, aims for a world title at Madison Square Garden in New York on the same bill as Lennox Lewis and Evander Holyfield. Page 52

Rugby union: Scotland

have made six changes to the team that lost to South Africa for their opening Five Nations Championship match against Wales. Page 49

Cricket: India scored 247

for eight in a hostile atmosphere on the first day of the second Test against Pakistan in Madras. Page 45

Rare Bard: A London theatre

is staging a little-read Shakespeare poem in an unfamiliar verse form — and the result is 80 minutes of thrilling drama. Page 34

Richard Morrison

"This time the curse of the lottery has blighted not some over-ambitious theatre, but the humblest and oldest servants of British mass culture." Page 35

Pop 1: "John Lennon"

is cool because he was exactly the kind of person who would have loathed Chris Evans. — Caitlin Moran on a television commercial too ghastly to watch. Page 36

Pop 2: How three teenage sisters

from Manchester adopted the name Cleopatra and set about ruling the world. Plus the week's new pop albums reviewed. Page 37

Jane Shilling

"Pregnancy is a thrilling experience, during which you have a fair chance of looking as sexy as you ever have." Page 20

Grace Bradberry

"Far from providing escapism, *Shakespeare in Love* is thrusting a rapier into settled relationships." Page 21

Breakthrough: Jeff Randall

, the editor of *Sunday Business*, is relishing his paper's breaking the 60,000 sales barrier. Page 38

Trashed: Peter Stuart

, TV's original king of trash who is about to launch another risqué Channel 4 series, believes that Channel 5's output is going too far. Page 41

Help: Guidelines are needed

to ensure that school governors understand their position. Page 43

The shameful evidence

of corruption by IOC members, the inability of the IOC to agree to an anti-drugs regime that will be effective, and the failure to reform the bid process, confirm that the IOC has lost its effectiveness. Members talk about the need to get rid of a few "rotten apples". But the rot is systematic. As the IOC president, Juan Antonio Samaranch must carry the ultimate responsibility for the crisis. He is not an answer to the problem. He represents the problem. *The Sydney Morning Herald*

RADIO & TV

Preview: Home improvement buffs parade their cock-ups. *Britain's Worst DIYers* (ITV, 9pm) Review: Paul Hoggart on a flu virus that could return. Pages 50, 51

PERSONAL

The blame game

Ministers in Northern Ireland cannot wait upon events. The Government should emphasise that the only real obstacle to progress is parliamentary obduracy. A moratorium on prisoner releases would be a suitable sign of ministerial resolution. No executive can be called until de-commissioning begins. Page 23

Conviction politics

It may be, should be, upsetting for Republicans to see the words of George Washington upstaged by the opinion polls of George Gallup. They must nonetheless prepare an exit strategy. Page 23

Women's rock

If an EU grant can encourage not only women but whole families to the underpopulated Outer Hebrides, it will fulfil its most valuable purpose, a diverse economy where a community now dies. Page 23

SIMON JENKINS

Barely a week goes by without these ritual slayings. Harriet Harman, Ron Davies, Derek Draper, Peter Mandelson, Glenn Hoddle... anyone will do. Page 22

MARY ANN SIEGHART

Eating a T-bone steak is a voluntary pursuit. As long as shops attach a label informing that there is a minuscule risk of infection, that should be the limit of government intervention. Page 22

PHILIP HOWARD

Ever vaster daily avalanches of paper bury us at home. I do not want the Royal Bank of Scotland to invent new accounts that will win me discounts in restaurants and for accident insurance. Page 22

Renford Bambrugh

Cambridge philosopher; Alexander Cooke, physician; The Right Rev Patrick Casey, Bishop of Brentwood; Joan Cooper, social reformer. Page 25

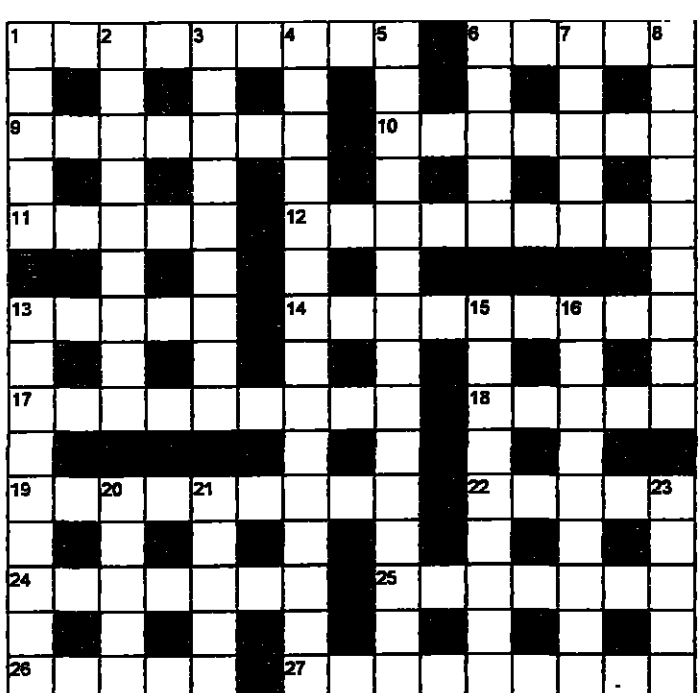
Police no-go areas in Northern

Ireland; God's judgment: minimum wage; Stirling Moss on elderly drivers: institutional racism; Alfred Brendel defends Goethe. Page 23

THE FROG IS A SYMBOL OF HOPE FOR YOUNG GIRLS EVERYWHERE WHO DREAM OF SOMEDAY MEETING THEIR PRINCE. TO DESTROY HIM IS TO DESTROY THE VERY INNOCENCE OF CHILDHOOD. SO CLASSMATES, I BEG OF YOU, PUT DOWN YOUR KNIVES AND JOIN ME IN PROTEST!

Tomorrow In
THE SATURDAY TIMES
Lisa Against Vivisection
in the new **SIMPSONS** comic strip

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 21,019



- ACROSS
- Even though rejected with reprimand, unlikely to flare up (9).
 - Allow out of bed to relax (3,2).
 - Brave young lady left a testament (7).
 - Rows for sport (7).
 - Your old baffling disease is simple (5).
 - Erect pine crashes where disaster's most severe (9).
 - Sacred text worked into tiny fabric pattern (5).
 - Takes back fruit, first of several goods to be moved out (9).
 - Cane, say, for bribe (9).
 - Permitted to speak in normal voice (5).
 - Old writer that's made a knight never mixes with cast (9).
 - Soldier wearing protective gear
- for possibly dangerous spells (5).
- DOWN
- Scrap plane journey, having no money (5).
 - Athletic event broadcast to people (5,4).
 - Cutting entertainment short, firmly fix seating order (9).
 - Points out cause of one's being misled like this? (2,3,5).
 - Full of ideas over residential development in cradle of civilisation (7,8).
 - Philosopher making secure point (5).
 - Time needed to overcome breach in church council here (5).
 - Law groups made haste without pressure, and missed only one point of law? (9).
 - Knowing excellent joke (9).
 - One needs energy to maul furiously hard in crucial area of field (9).
 - Mauler's son's written in drink leading to downfall (9).
 - Cheek root that's come up (5).
 - Anger with refusal, in any case (5).
 - Set free, but bound over? (5).

Solution to Puzzle No 20,018

FOODER PROMPTER
B I E A A R I
W A L L O P E R R I N G
C I A A J A H
L E G A B R O O K L E T
P E D E S T A R L A
O N E E A U B
K E S T R A L P I M E N T O
E A A N M U
R C F B A T T I E S T
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HOURS OF DARKNESS

Sun rises: 7.33 am Sun sets: 4.56 pm
Moon rises: 9.45 am Moon sets: 10.35 pm
Last quarter: February 8
London 4.56 pm to 7.31 am
Bristol 5.04 pm to 7.41 am
Birmingham 5.54 pm to 7.59 am
Manchester 5.59 pm to 7.46 am
Penzance 5.22 pm to 7.39 am

Books for Schools

taken inside

NEWSPAPERS

SUPPORT RECYCLING

Recycled paper made up
41% of the new national
UK newspapers at the
end of 1997

FORECAST

General: colder. Scotland will be bitterly cold with showers and a strong wind leading to blizzards in highlands and some sleet or snow at lower levels.
London, SE & Central S England, E Midlands, Channel Islands: mainly dry and bright. Small risk of a shower. Wind NW, Max 6C (45F).
E & W Wales, Lake District: heavy showers. Wind strong. NW, Max 5C (41F).
W Midlands, S Wales, SW & NW England, Isle of Man: heavy showers. Wind strong. NW, Max 5C (41F).
N Wales, Lake District: heavy showers. Wind strong. NW, Max 5C (41F).
Outlook for weekend: becoming even colder, with showers and sunny spells.

AROUND BRITAIN YESTERDAY

City	Temp	Wind	Cloud	Humidity	City	Temp	Wind	Cloud	Humidity
Aberdeen	5.6	0.01	9	46	Jersey	11.1	0.01	11	52
Anglesey	2.6	0.01	12	54	London	11.1	0.08	7	45
Ardara	0.0	0.02	10	50	Leeds	6.3	0.01	14	56
Avalon	0.9	0.14	6	43	Leicester	10.0	0.09	4	39
Belfast	0.5	0.05	13	48	Lincoln	9.6	0.01	9	48
Birmingham	1.1	11	12	50	Liverpool	13.3	0.01	13	48
Bognor R	1.1	11	12	50	Manchester	13.3	0.01	13	48
Bristol	1.1	11	12	50	Marlborough	1.1	0.01	13	48
Buxton	1.3	0.01	10	50	Monticame	2.2	0.02	10	50
Cardiff	0.8	0.01	11	52	Newcastle	6.7	0.01	13	55
Canterbury	3.2	0.01	12	54	Norwich	3.8	0.01	13	55
Caswell Bay	4.3	0.01	13	56	Oxford	2.9	0.01	12	54
Cirencester	2.9	0.07	10	50	Perth	0.1	0.01	12	55
Colchester	0.7	0.45	8	46	Portsmouth	2.8	0.01	14	57
Edinburgh	0.0	0.01	13	55	Southampton	1.5	0.01	12	54
Exeter	0.0	0.01	13	55	Swansea	1.1	0.01	12	54
Gloucester	0.0	0.01	13	55	Torquay	1.1	0.01	12	54
Guernsey	0.0	0.01	13	55	Weymouth	1.1	0.01	12	54
Hastings	0.4	0.01	13	55	Widnes	1.1	0.01	12	54
Heathrow	0.0	0.01	13	55	Worcester	1.1	0.01	12	54
Hemel Hempstead	0.0	0.01	13	55	Wrexham	1.1	0.01	12	54
Hereford	0.0	0.01	13	55	Wynnefryn	1.1	0.01	12	54
High Wycombe	0.0	0.01	13	55	Wynnefryn	1.1	0.01	12	54
Ilfracombe	0.0	0.01	13	55	Wynnefryn	1.1	0.01	12	54
Isle of Man	0.0	0.01	13	55	Wynnefryn	1.1	0.01	12	54
Leamington	0.0	0.01	13	55	Wynnefryn	1.1	0.01	12	54
Luton	0.0	0.01	13	55	Wynnefryn	1.1	0.01	12	54

YESTERDAY'S HOTTEST

Hawarden, Flintshire 15C (59F). Lowest day max Llewellyn 04C (39F). Wettest Alnham and Loch Glacach. Highland 0.6in. Sunniest Newcastle 6 hrs.

ABROAD

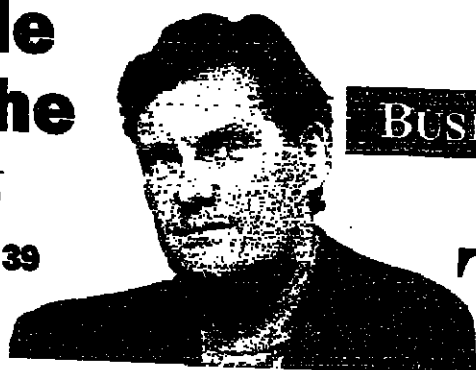
City	Temp	Wind	Cloud	Humidity	City	Temp	Wind	Cloud	Humidity
Ayacucho	13	50	5	43	Madrid	8	46	5	52
Azores	18	64	5	45	Managua	12	54	7	32
Bahia	17	63	5	45	Manila	14	57	10	30
Bahia	17	63	5	45	Mexico	20	68	10	30
Bahia	17	63	5	45	Montevideo	14	57	10	30
Bahia	17	63	5	45	Moscow	24	75	10	30
Bahia	17	63	5	45	Mumbai	26	79	10	30
Bahia	17	63	5	45	Nairobi	17	63	10	30
Bahia	17	63	5	45	Paris	10	50	10	30
Bahia	17	63	5	45	Rangoon	27	81	10	30
Bahia	17	63	5	45	Rio de Janeiro	27	81	10	30
Bahia	17	63	5	45	Sao Paulo	27	81	10	30
Bahia	17	63	5	45	Singapore	27	81	10	30
Bahia	17	63	5	45	Sydney	27	81	10	30
Bahia	17	63	5	45	Taipei	27	81	10	30
Bahia	17	63	5	45	Tokyo	27	81	10	30
Bahia	17	63	5	45	Toronto	10	50	10	30
Bahia	17	63	5	45	Winnipeg	10	50	10	30
Bahia	17	63	5	45	Wynnefryn	1.1	0.01	12	54

WIND TODAY

Changes to the chart below from noon: High M moves slow and declines slightly. Low K moves slowly E and fills. Low L moves slowly N and deepens slightly.

WIND TODAY

	Sum hrs	Rain mm	g>max	h=hal max
Jersey		0.01	1	35
London	1.1	0.08	1	40
Leeds	6.3	0.01	13.6	56 sh
London	1.1	0.05	9	48
Leuchak	5.6	0.01	9	48
London	1.3		13.6	58
Swesled	1.1	0.01	13.6	58
Manchester	1.4	0.01	13	55
Margate	1.1	0.01	13	55
Manchester	2.2	0.02	10	50
Margate	6.7	0.01	13	55 sh
London	1.1	0.01	13	55
Oxford	2.9	0.01	12	54
Perthence		0.01	13	55
Perthence	0.1		13	55
Prestrayn	0.9	0.01	12	54 sh
Post on the Sands	1.1	0.01	13	55
Scarborough	5.5	0.01	13	55
Southampton	1.1	0.01	13	55
Stamford	3.4	0.01	11	52
Stamford	1.1	0.01	13	55
Stomoway	1.1	0.29	6	43
Stomoway	1.1		11	52
Stranraer	1.3		13	55
Torbay	1.4	0.04	14	46
Torbay	1.0		13	55
Torquay	1.0		13	55



BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 5 1999

Insiders claim that Longbridge plant has already been abandoned by BMW

Rover rescue branded a sham

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY, SIGRID AUFTERBECK AND ARTHUR LEATHLEY

LONGBRIDGE, the huge Rover car plant in Birmingham with 14,000 employees, has already been abandoned by its parent, BMW, according to senior Rover insiders who have branded the £2 billion rescue package a sham.

An announcement about the end of the Rover series and the closure of Longbridge had been tipped for the Geneva Motor show next month, but BMW chiefs have brought the

issue to a head early with today's meeting of the company's supervisory board. The meeting could sack Bernd Pischetsrieder, BMW's chief executive and the only supporter of keeping the Rover operation intact.

Despite the deal to save Longbridge, struck in December, Rover has not started building the production line for the new Mini, nor has it placed orders with suppliers for the car, which is due to be produced by next year. Neither has Rover put in a formal request to the Department of Trade and Industry for state

aid for the new Rover models, despite having indicated it needed such aid to bolster its rescue package. The salvation for Longbridge was struck after unions agreed to flexible working practices. They are now dismayed at the prospect of Longbridge collapsing.

The rescue package was agreed to increase the plant's productivity, which lags behind that of its European competitors. The problems facing Rover, which industry experts say produces cars that people do not want to buy, were underlined yesterday when figures revealed that its share of the British car market plummeted last month.

The troubled group saw new registrations crash 45 per cent from 20,588 to 11,218, reducing its share of the overall market to less than one in 20 sales. Rover is usually the third-biggest seller in the UK behind Ford and Vauxhall, but it finished behind Peugeot, Renault and Volkswagen.

Business Today

Commentary:
At sea in the marketplace 29
Stock Markets:
Bid ahead for F&I? 30
Equity prices:
Uolt tracks 32



Family fortunes
Brother and sister with the future of BMW in their hands
Commentary 29, Feature 31

STOCK MARKET INDICES	
FTSE 100	5939.8 (-0.4)
Nikkei	14086.85 (-74.76)
DAX	3230.25 (-36.56)
S&P Composite	1257.84 (-14.23)

US RATE	
Federal Funds	4.75% (4.75%)
90-day	5.31% (5.26%)

LONDON MONEY	
3-month sterling	5.75% (5.75%)
Life long gilt	118.63 (119.43)

STERLING	
New York	1.6385* (1.6350)
London	1.6380 (1.6380)
Frankfurt	1.4506 (1.4426)
Paris	1.2322 (1.2310)
Yen	183.61 (183.58)
£ index	100.6 (100.3)

DOLLAR	
London	1.1306* (1.1307)
Frankfurt	1.1205 (1.1205)
Paris	1.1205 (1.1205)
Yen	104.3 (104.5)

NORTH SEA OIL	
Brent 15-day (Apr)	\$10.85 (\$11.00)

GOLD	
London close	\$288.75 (\$287.05)

Ladbroke set to buy Stakis in £1.5bn deal

By DOMINIC WALSH

LADBROKE, the hotel and gaming group, is in talks to acquire Stakis, its Glasgow-based rival, in a £1.5 billion deal. If a merger goes through, the enlarged Ladbroke is also tipped to make a £400 million move on Vaux.

Stakis admitted that it had received an approach "that may or may not lead to an offer for the company in the region of 140p". It declined to identify the suitor but industry sources confirmed that a recommended offer from Ladbroke of at least 150p could be announced as soon as next week.

It is understood that both sides are keen to do a deal, although observers believe the statement could spark a bidding war involving the likes of Whitbread and possibly Accor of France. One said: "Whitbread are unlikely to sit back and let Ladbroke have things all their own way."

News of the deal comes amid mounting City pressure for consolidation in the sector. Vaux, which owns Swallow Hotels, is known to have received approaches from Stakis and Whitbread last year, and both also looked at Thistle Hotels. If Stakis walks away from a Ladbroke deal, it could renew its own takeover ambitions.

Stakis was forced by the Takeover Panel to issue a statement after a sharp rise in its share price since *The Times* revealed two weeks ago that Ladbroke and Stakis had held exploratory talks. Its shares, languishing at 100p before the report, rose a further 26p yesterday to 137p. Ladbroke shares shed 4p to 238p.

One of the main issues under discussion is likely to be the role of David Michels, the Stakis chief executive and regarded as one of the best managers in the hotel business. If a deal is agreed, it is inconceivable that Mr Michels would not take over from David Jarvis as head of Hilton International, putting a question mark over Mr Jarvis's future.

The recent appointment of Mike Smith, head of Ladbroke's betting and gaming division, to run Rank Group leaves a gap for Ian Payne, managing director of Stakis Casinos. Neil Chisman of Stakis is thought likely to lose out to the highly regarded Brian Wallace as finance director.

Kim Howells, Competition Minister, ruled that Candent would have too much control over the breakdown market if it merged the RAC with its own Green Flag subsidiary which it bought last year.



David Michels, who is regarded as one of the best managers in the British hotel business

Rate cut fails to curb jitters in rollercoaster ride for market

By ALASDAIR MURRAY, ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

THE stock market yesterday endured a rollercoaster day with even the Bank of England's unexpected move to reduce base rates to their lowest level in more than four years failing to curb the jitters of investors.

While the Bank's decision to reduce rates from 6 per cent to 5.5 per cent was greeted with glee by business and the unions, the market turned lower on fears that the Federal Reserve might consider raising rates in the US.

The anticipated reluctance of the European Central Bank to kick-start the European economy with its own rate cut also took a toll of the market. The Bank said it had trimmed rates because "prospects for international activity and prices, domestic costs and consumer demand" implied that a further reduction was necessary to keep inflation on target. It was the fifth consecutive month in which the MPC has cut rates, reducing them from a peak last summer of 7.5 per cent.

Wim Duisenberg, President of the European Central Bank, said there was still no indication of "significant upward or downward pressures on prices". He added that the ECB had no intention of intervening in the foreign exchange markets despite the recent decline in the value of the euro.

The stock market jumped immediately after the decision was announced to hit a peak

RAC poised for float as DTI blocks US sale

By FRASER NELSON

THE Royal Automobile Club is preparing for a stock market flotation after its £450 million sale to Candent yesterday fell foul of the Department of Trade and Industry.

In a move designed to deliver the promise of share windfalls to its 12,000 members - worth around £33,000 under the aborted Candent deal - the RAC will now either go public or find another buyer willing to table a "knock-out offer".

It is widely expected that Britain's second largest roadside breakdown service will receive approaches from venture capital buyers. It is understood that Citiven, which vied with Candent in last summer's takeover talks, is seeking immediate negotiations.

Stephen P. Holmes, vice-chairman of Candent, an American corporation that owns Britain's NCP car parks group but which has also been dogged by allegations of fraud in the US, said: "We are very disappointed. The British motorist has lost out here - the deal would have been far better for them."

The RAC Club in Pall Mall, London, with its golf course in Epsom, Surrey, still owned by the members, has now been separated from breakdown business.

Neil Johnson, RAC chief executive, said that members who were looking forward to windfalls will not be disappointed: "I don't think we'll have to look actively for buyers - they will come to us. I know there is a lot of interest out there, but they will have to join the queue."

Deutsche's Auschwitz past hits Bankers

SHARES in Bankers Trust slipped further in Wall Street trading last night as speculation mounted that its takeover by Deutsche Bank is running into trouble after the German bank disclosed that it helped finance construction of the Nazi death camp at Auschwitz.

The World Jewish Congress is seeking meetings with Rolf Breuer, Deutsche Bank's chairman, to force the bank to settle Holocaust claims. Yesterday Deutsche Bank historians said that newly uncovered documents showed it had played a part in financing the construction of the Nazi camp in southern Poland.

In New York, Bankers Trust shares eased 88 cents a share to \$25 (£23) against a year high of \$136.05, as investors took an opinion on the \$10.1 billion deal with Deutsche Bank unravelling. Deutsche's stock firmed £0.35 to £48.50 (£32).

Goldman Sachs to block staff windfall

FROM OLIVER AUGUST IN NEW YORK

THE partners of Goldman Sachs may exclude the vast majority of their employees from a share windfall bonanza when the US investment bank attempts once more to float on the US stock market later this year.

After the collapse of the plan, Jon Corzine, the co-executive chairman and the strongest advocate of a flotation, lost his job.

The flotation is now being managed by Hank Paulson, who succeeded Mr Corzine as chief executive, with the help of John Thornton, who is a top partner based in London as well as chairman of Laura Ashley, the troubled retailer.

Some Goldman Sachs insiders are insisting that all employees should receive stock, although that amount is likely to be smaller than the previously suggested figure of shares equivalent to between 50 per cent and 100 per cent of each employee's salary. It is understood that employees are being prepared for their exclusion from the flotation windfalls.

Mr Paulson and Mr Thornton, who initially opposed the flotation, have agreed that the deal will be revived this year but they are said to be changing the structure devised by Mr Corzine. Under the new blueprints, control

over the most secretive of Wall Street banks will be exerted firmly from the top. One of the objections to the flotation by Mr Thornton and other top partners had been that it could undermine Goldman's hands-on management style.

Foreshadowing changes to come, Goldman last month disbanded its six-member executive committee that made all big decisions. In its place, a bigger committee of all department heads will advise the top trio, made up of Mr Paulson, Mr Thornton and John Thain, the finance director.



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Tyneside buyout bid rejected by Siemens

By PAUL ARMSTRONG

SIEMENS, the electronics company, has rejected a management buyout proposal for its crippled microchip plant on Tyneside.

The collapse in negotiations ends the 250 employees' best hopes of keeping the doors open beyond the June closing date set by Siemens.

It is understood that Siemens refused to accept the proposal from two of the plant's senior executives, who were believed to be offering about £400 million, despite having no better deal on the table.

A company spokesman refused to reveal why Siemens had rejected the proposal. Analysts, however, are speculating that Siemens is holding out for a higher price. Jim Wood-Smith, an analyst with Greig Middleton, said the price of chips, such as those produced at the Siemens plant, had risen sharply in the past fortnight.

Siemens spent £650 million on the Newcastle project, which employed 1,100 people when its closure was announced last July.

ICI has a mountain to climb as profits slump

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY
INDUSTRIAL
CORRESPONDENT

ICI, the former industrial bell-wether and biggest company in the UK, yesterday offered no way out of its gloomy trading prospects and massive debt mountain. Sir Ronald Hampel, chairman, said this year would bring "continuing uncertainty and lower growth in many parts of the world, which will further impact our bulk chemicals businesses".

While the company, which is transforming itself from a commodity chemicals business to a speciality consumer group, said that its priority was to cut down its £4.2 billion debt, it would not say how. Analysts fear that its chances of selling businesses now are poor because the commodity chemicals market is in the doldrums. The company has hit two blocks in recent months over its disposal programme, when the Federal Trade Commission in the US halted the £1 billion sale of itsioxide operation and the £285 million sale of its Crofield business.

Brendan O'Neill, who will



ICI's Brendan O'Neill, left, and Alan Spall aim to reduce debt

become chief executive in the spring, said the change to new ICI was on course. He said: "We suffered a setback last year, but that does not mean the transformation is in crisis."

ICI saw pre-tax profits for the year to December 31 slump 17 per cent to £321 million as industrial chemicals reported a 14 per cent fall in volume along with declines of 3 per

cent in coatings, materials and overall group volume. Industrial chemicals produced a £31 million loss in the last quarter, while petrochemicals suffered a 26 per cent collapse in sales over the whole year.

The total dividend is maintained at 32p a share, with a second interim payment of 19.5p due April 19. The company said it would review the next dividend on the basis of the performance of the core business, the disposal programme and the economic outlook. Earnings per share, after goodwill and exceptional, fell to 26.7p (35.7p).

ICI is to shake up its bonus scheme for executives so that it is linked to cash generation and only rewards "hard-edged" achievements. It is also poised to reduce its headquarters operation, heightening speculation that it could move from Westminster.

Mr O'Neill insisted that the company was not vulnerable to a takeover and that it already had one of the biggest portfolios of speciality chemicals. The shares climbed 4p to 527p.

Tempus, page 30

Cammell Laird sees its boat come in

By ROBERT LEA

CAMMELL LAIRD, the ship repairer, prompted memories of the glory days of the Merseyside shipyards yesterday when it reported a near quadrupling in interim profits.

The company, famous earlier this century for building the *Mauretania* and the *Ark Royal*, reported pre-tax profits in its half year to October 31 of £4.7 million. Activities now include repairing Irish Sea ferries and converting vessels for North Sea oil fields.

The Cammell Laird name was resurrected four years ago when Coastline Industries bought the name and the dry docks that it leased in Birkenhead from VSEL.

Current growth, the company says, comes from increased dry dock capacity and the acquisition last year of operations on the Tyne and the Wear. Analysts expect full-year pre-tax profits of £9.7 million, rising to £15.4 million in 2000.

The dividend is 2p, up from 1.4p. The shares, floated 18 months ago at 100p, yesterday slipped 10p to 700p.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Telewest sets time for digital launch

TELEWEST, one of the big three cable companies, yesterday said that it will launch digital services in the fourth quarter of this year and confirmed the placing of an initial order of 100,000 digital set-top boxes with Pace Micro Technology. The announcement means that all three large cable companies — Telewest, NTL and Cable & Wireless — plan to launch their main digital services at about the same time and all three have placed set-top box orders with Pace.

Telewest yesterday unveiled strong fourth-quarter operating figures boosted by its Millennium package of a telephone line and 14 cable channels for £12.99 a month. The Millennium package and good results from Front Row, the cable industry's pay-per-view film service, boosted cable television figures before the merger with General Cable. The number of cable television customers rose by 19.5 per cent to 724,287.

Trafficmaster deal

SHARES in Trafficmaster, the traffic information network, yesterday rose by more than 16 per cent after announcing a five-year contract to supply the AA with information. Trafficmaster will receive a "substantial" annual fee and a share of revenues. The AA will start using the information in the first half of this year, but it is as yet unclear how it will be deployed. Probable options are a website and a mobile phone service. The shares rose 89p to 641½p, near their 652p high.

Durlacher increase

DURLACHER, the AIM-listed technology investment group whose shares have risen 250 per cent since November, has reported pre-tax profits of £31,000 for its half year to December 31, up from £150,000. Earnings per share were 11.58p (3.51p). There is again no interim dividend. Geoffrey Chamberlain, chairman and chief executive, said: "It is our intention to expand each of our key functions at a pace sufficient to maximise the symbiotic relationship which exists between them."

Coats Viyella jobs go

COATS VIYELLA, the textiles company, is to close a knitwear factory that makes clothing for Marks & Spencer. It will make 287 staff redundant. The plant at Loughborough, Leicestershire, employs 430 people, but 143 jobs are to be switched to a plant at nearby Shepshed. The company, which said that the closure was part of a planned restructuring, is the latest in a long line of Marks & Spencer clothing suppliers to shed staff. Coats Viyella employs 9,500 textile workers in the UK.

Nightfreight ahead

NIGHTFREIGHT, the parcel delivery company, attributed its increase in profits in a deteriorating market to improved margins. Pre-tax profit for the year to November 30 was £3.5 million, up from £3 million last year, on a turnover of £87.5 million (£88.2 million). Earnings per share were 4.71p (4.15p) and the final dividend of 1.5p (1.3p) brings the total to 2.1p per share (1.8p). David Cobb, chairman, said: "Consolidation is inevitable and we expect to play a part in that process."

Swan Hill shares leap

SWAN HILL GROUP, a construction company, yesterday saw its shares leap 23p to 68½p after it said that it had received unsolicited approaches that may lead to an offer being made for it. In March last year, Swan Hill reported its first annual profit since 1994 after emerging from a long restructuring. The company, formerly known as Higgs & Hill, made pre-tax profits of £8.79 million for the year to December 31, 1997, against losses of £3.87 million in 1996.

Bass buys in Germany

BASS, the brewing and leisure group, has made its first bar-restaurant investment outside Britain with the acquisition of a 19-strong chain in Germany. The Alex Group bars, similar to Bass's All Bar One and Edward's chains in Britain, are said by the company to be "a toe in the water" in the continental market. The news came as the group reported a 2.2 per cent decline in beer volumes in pubs and bars and a 13.2 per cent decline in off-trade in the first quarter.

Cadbury's Dutch sale

CADBURY SCHWEPES is pulling out of confectionary production in The Netherlands after a decision to sell its Dutch factories. Cadbury Faam is selling its production facilities, which have a net book value of £8.7 million to Astra Sweets, the Dutch company. Cadbury will concentrate instead on building up its brands in The Netherlands and Scandinavia and will source its products from other manufacturers.

AirTouch advances

AIRTOUCH, the American telecommunications group that is being acquired by Vodafone, the British mobile phones group, for \$66.5 billion (£40 billion), yesterday reported a 54 per cent leap in earnings in 1998 to \$608 million. The company, which is based in San Francisco, said that it added 4.3 million customers during the year, with well over half coming from outside of the US, taking its total customer base to 17.6 million.

CCB expanding

COCA-COLA BEVERAGES (CCB), one of Coca-Cola's main bottlers and whose shares are listed in London, is expanding its presence in Romania by buying two bottling plants. CCB will pay £15 million for the territory owned by Ozgorkey Coca-Cola, which accounts for about 12 per cent of Coca-Cola's volume in Romania. The acquisition, taking CCB's share of Coca-Cola sales in Romania to 64 per cent, is its first since flotation last year. CCB shares fell 1p to 107p yesterday.

Chemring approached

SHARES of Chemring jumped 45p to 151p yesterday after the defence and engineering group said it was considering an approach that could lead to an agreed offer. Earlier this week, the company reported pre-tax profits of £1.25 million for the 13 months to October 31 on turnover of almost £75 million. In the previous year to September 30, the company incurred a £24 million loss after provisions associated with a restructuring. At yesterday's price, the company is valued at £36 million.

As you'd expect, Scotland is at the top of Great Britain.

THE VERDICTS				
COMPANY	SCORE	DATE		
Scottish Power	81.5	Feb 09 1998		
Shell	79	Oct 27 1997		
British Land	79	Dec 07 1998		
BAA	78	Dec 22 1997		
BP	78	June 29 1998		
Legal & General	78	June 22 1998		
Granada	78	Feb 02 1998		
Cadbury Schweppes	77	Apr 14 1998		
PowerGen	76	July 06 1998		
Boots	76	Apr 27 1998		
Lloyds TSB	75	Nov 10 1997		
British Aerospace	75	June 15 1998		
Stagecoach	74	Sept 1 1998		
Schroders	74	June 01 1998		
BSG	74	Nov 03 1997		
Asda	74	Oct 13 1997		
Reuters	73	Dec 14 1998		
Tesco	73	June 08 1998		
Reckitt & Colman	73	May 18 1998		
British Energy	73	Apr 20 1998		
Smiths Industries	73	Nov 24 1997		
Halfax	73	Jan 05 1998		
COLT Telecom	72	Jan 18 1999		
Nycomed Amersham	72	Nov 09 1998		
United News & Media	71	May 11 1998		
Hays	71	Oct 12 1998		
National Power	70	Jan 11 1998		
Prudential	70	Oct 5 1998		
3i	70	May 04 1998		
Diageo	69	Nov 2 1998		
Savem Trent	69.5	Oct 19 1998		
WPP	69	Aug 10 1998		
Carlton Communications	69	Sept 29 1998		
Unilever	69	Feb 23 1998		
Scotmah & Newcastle	69	Mar 02 1998		
Allied Domecq	68	Nov 30 1998		
SmithKline Beecham	68	Sept 14 1998		
HSBC	68	Aug 17 1998		
Compass	68	July 20 1998		
Rally-Royce	68	Feb 16 1998		
Rio Tinto	67	Nov 17 1997		
ICI	67	Mar 16 1998		
Road Service	67	Jan 4 1999		
Amvescap	66	Sept 21 1998		
Railtrack	66	Jan 12 1998		
Sema	66	Nov 23 1998		
Tomkins	65	Nov 16 1998		
Abbey National	65	May 25 1998		
Norwich Union	65	Jan 19 1998		
Alliance & Leicester	64	July 13 1998		
Thames Water	64	Aug 03 1998		
CU*	63	Dec 01 1997		
Woolwich	63	Dec 23 1998		
Rentokil Initial	62	Dec 08 1997		
J Sainsbury	62	Aug 24 1998		
British Airways	61	Oct 20 1997		
Pearson	59	Oct 06 1997		
royal & SunAlliance	58	Mar 30 1998		
Barclays	57	Jan 26 1998		
Safeway	54	Mar 09 1998		
NatWest	54	Mar 23 1998		
United Utilities	54	Apr 06 1998		
Bilston	53	Sept 7 1998		
BAT Industries**	49	Dec 15 1997		
Telewest	47	Oct 26 1998		

* before the merger with General Accident

** before the demerger into financial services and tobacco and the subsequent deals to create AlliedZurich and merge BAT with Rothmans

Source: THE TIMES 25th January 1999.

The Times, in a recent survey* of the country's leading corporations, placed ScottishPower at the top. We'd like to thank all our customers, staff and shareholders for putting us in our natural place.



ScottishPower

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* Just under 18 months ago, The Times started a unique analysis of the 100 leading corporations in Britain. The board structure is analysed, as are the market's views of the companies, and a rating out of a 100 is given, based on issues such as how well the directors are said, how the shares have performed and whether the company has a well explained and executed ethical policy.

EXCHANGE RATES

Bank	Bank	Bank	Bank
Australia \$	2.54	Japan Yen	199.67
Austria Sch	23.00	Malta	193.34
Belgium F	61.53	Netherlands Gld	3.364
Canada \$	61.57	New Zealand \$	3.050
Cyprus Cyp £	0.8887	Norway Kr	13.35
Denmark Kr	1.36	Portugal Esc	200.48
Finland Mk	5.94	Spain Ptas	166.64
France F	6.55	Sweden Kr	10.36
Germany M	3.006	Switzerland F	1.736
Greece Dr	243	Turkey Lira	500.48
Hong Kong \$	13.5	USA \$	1.746
India Rupee	47.5		
Indonesia Rp	1775		
Israel Sheq	2.032		
Italy Lira	736		

Notes for small denomination banknotes only as supplied by Barclays Bank. Different rates apply to travellers' cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.

All at sea in the marketplace



COMMENTARY
by our City Editor

While Eddie George and his colleagues on the Monetary Policy Committee continued their push for national canonisation yesterday, the markets appeared strangely wrong-footed by the latest half-point cut in interest rates. Sure, the committee nature of the MPC has in the past produced a number of compromise decisions. The Bank may even have had an early sight of the revisions being carried out on the average earnings data and certainly received a report on pay pressures from its regional agents. But with the *Quarterly Inflation* report looming — providing the MPC with a firm target on which to fix its sights — the City should have had enough clues as to the likely outcome.

Just as most economists have substantially revised their inflation expectations downwards since November, there is little reason to believe the Bank would have modified its own prediction otherwise. The Bank has also demonstrated in the current rate-cutting spree that it is prepared to adopt a more activist style, making larger rate reductions in an effort to revive business and consumer confidence.

The City consensus is that the Bank will now leave rates on hold for a few months before making another smaller move downwards towards 5 per cent by the end of the year. Certainly there is a reasonable argument that the Bank will not move in

March, the MPC meeting closely preceding the Budget. But there was little else in the bland statement that accompanied yesterday's decision to suggest that the Bank has any intention of repeating the experimental "pause" it undertook in late 1997. Given the City's poor recent record of forecasting the Bank's behaviour, the benign inflation outlook and the continuing uncertainties about the health of both the domestic and international economy, it seems more reasonable to expect that the Bank will again surprise with its generosity. It must be remembered that the Bank's mandate includes supporting the Government's growth objectives — and unlike the European Central Bank there is no comfort zone for inflation. If inflation is set to dip below the 2.5 per cent target figure, the Bank has to take action. With some members of the MPC clearly indicating that they would like to see interest rates fall below an estimated "neutral" level of 4.5 per cent to stimulate the economy, the internal pressure remains for further cuts.

Not that this is likely to make much difference to the contrarians of the stock market. Having pushed shares back towards

record levels despite the gloomy short-term economic outlook, the latest rate cut brought only a short-lived initial cheer before the market followed Wall Street lower. Indeed, with the market's eyes increasingly fixed abroad, suggestions that US rates might even have to rise and the ECB's dogmatic reluctance to consider an interest rate cut are far more likely to determine the stock market outlook.

Crash reaches Longbridge

Longbridge has been the ugly sister of the British motor industry longer than most can remember. At last, in a deal with unions, BMW agreed last December to make good years of under-investment by other owners that left productivity well behind best standards. Oddly, there has appeared a remarkable lack of urgency to get

this vital programme moving. Now we know why. Bernd Pischetsrieder, the friendly face of German ownership, may have been on the same wavelength as Brummie workers, but was not, it seems, able to convince the Munich hard men back home.

The five year strategy of reviving Rover's mid-market car business, rather than just Land Rover and the Mini, has got nowhere. Why pursue it at such huge cost when there is likely to be a world surplus of more modern capacity for a decade?

BMW is highly profitable, minus Rover. But it is not big enough in the world car league to throw investment and sustain heavy losses for several years at a factory that would, at best, be peripheral to its corporate future.

What made sense in 1994, when BMW bought Rover, now looks different. In the past two years, the outlook for the global car market and the industry's structure have been trans-

formed. Longbridge has become a costly irrelevance, a lump of capacity ripe to be rationalised to the benefit of those that survive. The big questions in Munich seem to be whether to sell to General Motors, merge with Honda or forge a new survival strategy.

In Britain, however, Longbridge cannot be dismissed so cavalierly, especially by a Government whose predecessors, alongside the forerunners of today's union leaders, must bear much of the blame for its ills. Under the BMW plan, it was to retain 14,000 manufacturing jobs.

These are key jobs and skills for the West Midlands. On them also hang the future prospects of the components industry, which is already under threat from other global mergers.

Herr Pischetsrieder is a gentleman who earned the respect due to one such, not least in becoming the preferred inheritor of the Rolls-Royce car brand. He also knew that BMW would not have

been allowed to buy Rover without commitment to its car range.

If BMW is now to play hardball, as it may need to, the Government should again reply in kind, using every fair trick or foul to save Longbridge, if not in BMW's hands then in someone else's. No excuses for failure.

Retailers should use their loaf

Logging basic commodity items for next to nothing is a familiar gimmick for supermarkets in quiet times. Once it was baked beans at 5p a tin. Now it is bread at 9p or 7p a loaf.

The game is ritualistic. The first to cut, in this case Asda, wins publicity as a champion of consumers. Responders, such as Tesco and Kwik Save, then match or beat the first cut to back up their own price promises.

The loss leader should attract more people into their stores, until we all are of the game and prices go back to normal. At down-market Kwik Save, the loaf now sells at 7p normally rates 17p.

Supermarkets claim this is harmless fun that helps hard-up shoppers. Not any more. Asda et

al should know by now that they are being watched. The Office of Fair Trading is already trying to resolve claims that the big four are profiteering at the expense of hard-pressed British farmers, abusing their market power to squeeze suppliers and mark prices up heavily to consumers.

Bread is a different case. The main potential losers are the remaining independent bakers and corner shops who might be driven out of business before the big chains hike prices back up. If game-players are to avoid a full monopoly vetting, they may have to convince the OFT that 17p is not profiteering, yet 7p is not predatory pricing. If they succeed, on the grounds that loss leaders are time-honoured, they still need to explain their cross timing to anxious investors.

Breakdown

RAC members ruing their missing £33,000 cheques should have seen the smile on the face of Neil Johnson, chief executive of their breakdown service yesterday.

The aborted merger allowed RAC's people to pore over would-be partner Green Flag and get a much better idea of what their business could be worth. There is no going back. Having escaped the mess that is Cendant, they now face a queue of venture capitalists anxious to be almost as generous. The underserving will get their big cheques after all.

Wolves victorious in bid battle with Marston's

By DOMINIC WALSH

WOLVERHAMPTON & Dudley Breweries has emerged victorious from its tit-for-tat bidding battle with Marston Thompson & Evershed, the rival brewer, after securing a resounding 73.45 per cent of Marston's shares.

The result brings down the curtain on what had become an increasingly bitter battle during the four months since Wolves first admitted it was staking its Midlands neighbour. It also means that the audacious £330 million Marston's counterbid for Wolves,

in a so-called Pac-Man defence, now lapses.

Shares in Marston's reacted by frothing 21½p higher to 306½p, while Wolves gained 11½p to 46½p. At those prices, the final Wolves bid values its target at about £295 million, compared with its original offer worth £262 million, although it will also assume debts of £110 million. Marston's shareholders will receive 230p in cash and 0.175 new Wolves shares for each share held.

David Thompson, managing director of W&EB, described the result of the vote as "a ringing endorsement of the strategy we have proposed". Whereas the Marston's Pac-Man bid had envisaged closing W&EB's two breweries to focus on managed pubs, Mr Thompson intends to keep all three breweries and about 1,500 of the combined estate of 1,900 pubs.

The Marston's takeover brings with it several well-known brands, including Pedigree Bitter and the fashionable Pitcher & Piano chain of bars. Both will be retained, although Mr Thompson has agreed to sell 170 pubs to Greene King for about £80 million and has earmarked another 250 tenancies for immediate disposal.

Although the Wolves victory had been widely expected, Mr Thompson said: "I didn't know until midday whether we'd won. I remained on the edge of my seat until the very last moment." Allowing himself a wry smile after the result, he added: "I shall look forward to sampling a pint of Pedigree at the Burton brewery in due course."

Mr Thompson estimated the total costs of the deal, including the cost of Marston's abortive securitisation deal with Nomura, at about £30 million. However, he has promised to extract at least £17 million in annual savings from putting the two companies together — there will be 250 job losses — and believes the deal provides a platform for enhancing shareholder returns.

He added: "The regional brewers have been out of favour for some time now. We believe consolidation is the way forward and that this deal will help to bring the sector back into favour."

Nick Letcher and Mike Thompson, respectively chief executive and finance director of Marston's, who earned plaudits in the City for the way they handled the defence, are not expected to be offered jobs in the enlarged Wolves.

Tesco in talks with Samsung

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM

TESCO, the supermarkets group which bought a hypermarket business in Thailand last year, is in talks to enter the South Korean market.

The company is in advanced negotiations with Samsung Corporation, the trading arm of the Samsung Group, to set up a joint venture with its retail division. Samsung Corporation runs two department stores in Seoul and two discount centres in Taegu and Pusan. Samsung is also believed to be talking to a Japanese trading company. Tesco declined to comment.

The British food retailer is also investigating possibilities in Taiwan. Tesco said last month that its Lotus hypermarket in Thailand "continued to recover trade in difficult economic conditions and finished with like-for-like sales running ahead of last year".

Step up for Fitness First

FITNESS FIRST, the AIM-listed health and fitness club operator, is to move to the Stock Exchange's official list in an attempt to improve its ability to raise new funds for expansion (Dominic Walsh writes).

Michael Balfour, managing director, said: "We've probably got sufficient cash to fund our expansion for the next 12 to 18 months, but that could change. If the right opportunities came up we would need to have the kind of investors on

board to be able to tap them for money."

Since its AIM flotation in October 1996, the group's UK presence has grown from six clubs to 36 and it has another 33 in the pipeline. Its German joint venture, which has nine units, has another 14 in the pipeline, and Mr Balfour said that he was seeking similar opportunities in Spain, The Netherlands and Belgium.

Total UK memberships increased from almost 24,000 to

more than 52,000 last year, contributing to a doubling of pre-tax profits to £2.7 million in the year to October 31. Earnings per share reached 8.04p (4.36p), but there will be no dividend until next year as profits are ploughed into new openings.

Mr Balfour said that the company's "affordable fitness" concept means it is well placed to withstand any economic downturn.

Tempus, page 30

Microsoft video blunder

MICROSOFT has suffered its most embarrassing day in court as a video demonstration it offered in its defence to an anti-trust action was exposed as false (Oliver August writes from New York).

The software company tried to show the problems with a program written by a Justice Department technician and used as evidence in support of its anti-trust action. The program separates the Windows operating system from Micro-

soft's Internet browser. The Justice Department claims that Microsoft integrated the two products to gain control of the browser market.

In its defence, Microsoft suggested that the browser and the operating system could not be split without creating computer problems. In its video, it tried to show those problems.

However, it turned out that it had failed to use the department's separation program although it claimed to have done

so. The department saw the inconsistency on the menu bar of the filmed computer screen.

James Allchin, a Microsoft technician, said: "I am going to have to go back and find out what happened. They filmed the wrong system and probably grabbed the wrong screen shot."

The Justice Department said the incident was "obviously embarrassing to Microsoft" and tried to use it to undermine the defence's credibility.



Eyes on expansion: John Bowmer, chief executive of the Swiss company Adecco, left, with Tony Reeves, his Delphi counterpart

Delphi chiefs in bid bonanza

By CHRIS AYRES

DIRECTORS of Delphi Group looked set to benefit from a multi-million pound bonanza yesterday after the IT recruitment company received a £167 million takeover offer.

The offer, from Adecco, the Swiss personnel services company, values the stake held in Delphi by Rony Reeves, its chief executive, at £3.6 million. Doug Woodward, a US non-executive director of Delphi, will see his stake valued at £2.4 million.

Delphi's board has already recommended Adecco's cash offer, which values the

company at 56p a share. This includes a special 15p interim dividend. The offer represents a 50.7 per cent premium to the closing price of Delphi shares on January 29.

The shares rose 57½p to 550p yesterday. One year ago the shares traded at 827½p. John Bowmer, chief executive of Adecco, said Delphi would provide his company with a critical mass in the IT personnel services market around the world, especially in Europe.

"We will use Delphi as a springboard to expand into continental Europe," he said. The acquisition will help boost Adecco's revenues from IT to almost \$1 billion

(£600 million), accounting for about 10 per cent of its total sales.

Mr Bowmer said that Adecco was not planning any job cuts following the merger, as Delphi would be added, not integrated, into its existing operations.

Adecco has a network of 3,000 offices in 48 countries. The company is listed on the Swiss, Paris and Frankfurt exchanges.

Yesterday Delphi announced the sale of its 30.5 per cent interest in Decan, a French IT recruitment company, for £25.3 million.

Tempus, page 30

US sale welcomed by SB investors

By PAUL DURMAN

INVESTORS in SmithKline Beecham have welcomed the prospect that the drugs group is planning to sell Diversified Pharmaceutical Services, the American business bought for \$2.3 billion (£1.4 billion) in 1994.

SB is believed to be close to a deal that may come as soon as next week. Although the group is expected to take a heavy loss on the disposal, its shares rose almost 4 per cent yesterday to 83½p.

The sale of Diversified will represent an admission of error by Jan Leschly, SB's ebullient chief executive. The acquisition of Diversified was Mr Leschly's first big strategic move, a deal struck within weeks of his taking over as chief executive.

Diversified is a pharmaceutical benefit manager (PBM), which controls the drugs bought under employer healthcare plans. PBMs were briefly seen to hold the key to the US healthcare market, but regulatory restrictions have prevented Diversified from favouring SB drugs.

Eli Lilly, the American pharmaceuticals group, has already taken an enormous loss on its PBM, which it sold last year to Rite Aid, a drugs retailer.

John Murphy, analyst at Goldman Sachs, suggested that SB may be planning to drop its total healthcare strategy to focus on pharmaceuticals, the most profitable of its businesses.

This would pose doubts over the future of Clinical Laboratories, the US blood and urine-testing business that is under persistent pressure to cut prices.

"The best returns have traditionally come from the pure pharma plays like Glaxo Wellcome and Pfizer," Mr Murphy said.

Diversified is not thought to make any money for SB. Mr Leschly has previously defended its contribution, saying it provides useful information for the rest of the group.

IT CHARMS ITS PREY,
STRIKES QUICKLY
AND DISAPPEARS.

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TYPICAL BUSINESS
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Don't make any sudden moves. Keep your ears open. And trust your instincts. That's the best advice we can give to someone looking for a business management system. At Lawson Software, we encourage you to take your time, ask questions and talk to current customers of every software provider you're considering. Ask about service and support. And, of course, ask about the product. Is it capable of handling large volumes of transactions? Are the applications fully integrated? Process oriented? Web accessible? The answers may surprise you. Lawson Software's enterprise financials, human resources, procurement,

supply chain and performance indicator process suites provide innovative ways to gather, process and access information. We have over 20 years of experience in business management software, and a 96% customer retention rate over five years. We were the first to use web technology, enabling our customers to share vital information more freely and cost-effectively. Our Self-Evident Applications™ practically eliminate training costs. And our people are known for their professionalism and accessibility. In other words, we don't bite. Visit Lawson Software at www.lawson.com/more or call 0800 496 0706.



Fig. 1

Fig. 2

LAWSON
Software

STOCK MARKET

MICHAEL CLARK

Speculators circle FKI in the hope of an offer

IF YOU take the view that there is no smoke without fire, then we can assume that there is a bid on the way for FKI.

The price of the engineer's shares rose up 13p to 169p in heavy turnover that saw almost 11 million shares change hands by the close of business. Not bad for a company that lost its chief executive last year and subsequently saw its share price plunge from 227p to a low of 102p in October.

Trading has proved difficult for the company. In November Bob Beeston, chief executive, gave a gloomy rundown of prospects. In spite of a 13.5 per cent increase in profits at the halfway stage, he said that the group was vulnerable to the worldwide recession.

The group's current price tag of 696.3 million means that any bidder could pick up the business for a snip.

One broker said: "We have seen a lot of sharp price movements in the engineering sector. There has been talk of various bids, but today's move in FKI has been backed by solid turnover in the shares."

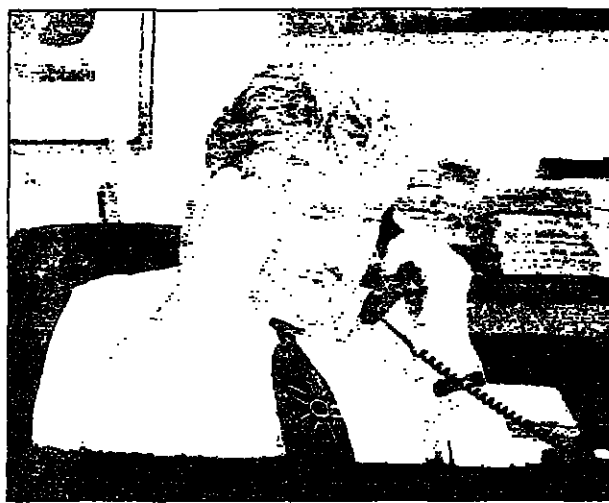
There was little apparent response to the half-point cut in interest rates with the London market giving up a 101-point lead to close virtually unchanged on the day. London's reversal followed opening falls on Wall Street, where prices gave ground in response to the threat of belt tightening by the Federal Reserve. The FTSE 100 index finished 0.4 down at 5,939.9 so once again it was left up to second-liners to generate interest with the FTSE 250 index up 19.4 at 5,322.6.

Turnover was again more than a billion shares.

The buyers were chasing Northern Leisure, sharply higher with a rise of 9p to 138p. It follows comments in this column linking the group to rival Lumina, up 37p to 760p. Word from the marketplace suggests Lumina may be prepared to offer an all-share deal in excess of 200p.

EMI Group was the best performer among the top 100 with a rise of 32p to 432p. Warburg Dillon Reed, the broker, has raised its recommendation on the shares from "hold" to "buy" on the back of its involvement in the Internet.

British Telecom eased another 3p to 950p but Goldman Sachs, the US securities house, has been waxing lyrical about prospects, having raised



Sir Colin Southgate, chairman of EMI, the shares of which rose 32p to 432p, buoyed by its Internet interests

its target price from \$80p to £11. It follows the decision by BT to invest a further £5 billion over the next five years. It rates the shares a "market outperformer".

Rival Cable & Wireless received a welcome boost from its mobile telephone interests catapulting the price 32p to 865p. The group has seen customers for its One-2-One sub-

sidary pass the two million mark for the first time.

There was an almost audible sigh of relief from the high street retailers to news of the latest cut in bank base rates. It is hoped the move will help to boost consumer expenditure. Debenhams advanced 15p to 413p, and there were rises at Kingfisher, 26p to 666p, Allied Carpets, 4p to 39p. Boots

disclosed, Mark Hake at Merrill Lynch, the broker, said: "You are probably looking at housebuilder, a regional or national player weak in the South, where most of Swan's business is."

City speculators claim this could be the first in a series of moves aimed at consolidating the industry.

Those also seen as possible takeover targets include Henry Boot, up 15p to 210p. BSC Group, up 10p to 68p. The company's most recent published net asset value is 115p a share. The identity of the suitor was not

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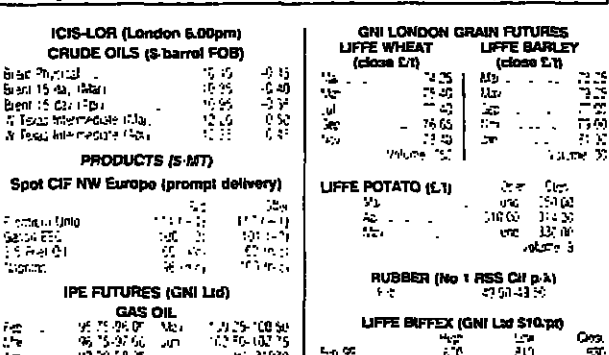
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CONCRETE BASE



Source: Thomson

HOUSEBUILDERS have enjoyed fresh stimulus during the past week as signs of a pick-up in the housing market have been underpinned by the latest cut in interest rates. Now there are also signs of a revival for the construction industry.

It comes in the wake of an "unsolicited approach" for Swan Hill Group, formerly Higgs & Hill, which responded with a rise of 23p to 68p. The company's most recent published net asset value is 115p a share. The identity of the suitor was not

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up to 896p. JJB Sports, 1p to 365p. New Look, 16p to 145p, and Wickes, 17p to 249p. Hamleys also stood out with a rise of 10p to 142p. Three separate lines totalling 500,000 went through the market late on Wednesday at the 140p level, a sizeable premium to the ruling price.

By contrast, the banks gave up an early lead perturbed by increased competition and reduced margins. Royal Bank of Scotland fell 36p to £11.52, HSBC 29p to £16.20, and Lloyds TSB 22p to 795p.

The speculators continued to drive BICC higher with a rise of almost 4p to 82p. Wassall holds about 9 per cent of the shares and continues to monitor the possibility of making a bid.

The 140p share offer for Stakis Hotels, up 3p to 137p, generated speculative support for the rest of the hotels sector.

Jarvis Hotels, up 9p to 103p, is seen as the next target for a bidder, while support was also seen in Millennium & Copthorne, 32p to 474p. Macdonald Hotels, 5p to 155p. However, Ladbrokes fell 4p to 238p. Thistle Hotels advanced 5p to 142p having hit a low of 103p in December, following the breakdown in takeover talks when the price stood at the 200p level.

High-flying ARM Holdings continued to power ahead with the price, lifting 15p to £20.37. This gave one director the opportunity to cash in some of his chips. Robin Saxby, chief executive, has sold 60,000 shares at £19.80 reducing his holding to 1.34 million, or 2.85 per cent.

AIM-listed Gardall Whaley & Barker rose 8p to 103p on the back of further share purchases by the board. Anthony Gardall has bought 25,000 shares at 95p taking his total holding to 53.2 million shares, or 61.5 per cent.

□ GILT-EDGED: The prospect of strong US non-farm payroll numbers later today undermined Treasury bonds and left gilts nursing losses on the day. Sentiment appeared unaffected by the half-point cut in base rates. In the futures pit, the March series of the long gilt fell 53p to £18.63.

□ NEW YORK: US shares caught the bond markets' interest rate cold. At midday the Dow Jones industrial average was down 36.56 points to 9,330.25.

MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday):	
Dow Jones	9,330.25 (-36.56)
S&P Composite	1,257.84 (-14.23)
Tokyo:	
Nikkei Average	14,086.85 (+1.74)
Hong Kong:	
Hong Kong	9,430.65 (+18.80)
Amsterdam:	
AEX Index	531.27 (+1.15)
Sydney:	
ASX	2,940.5 (+20.3)
Frankfurt:	
DAX	5,077.95 (+1.81)
Singapore:	
SEAC	1,378.90 (+12.11)
Brussels:	
BELEX	3,456.72 (+16.25)
Paris:	
CAC-40	4,167.42 (-1.43)
Zurich:	
SIX Gen	1,364.30 (+0.80)
London:	
FT 30	3,629.1 (+9.8)
FTSE 100	5,939.9 (-0.4)
FTSE 250	5,322.6 (+19.4)
FTSE 350	5,287.1 (+1.1)
FTSE 400	2,770.85 (+2.04)
FTSE All-Share	2,752.22 (+1.51)
FTSE Non-Financials	2,884.16 (+1.44)
FTSE Financials	115.78 (-0.51)
FTSE Govt Secs	756.2
FTSE 100 Vol	1,680.1 (-0.0002)
FTSE 100 Div	0.6693 (-0.0033)
FTSE 100 Yield	1.1810
FTSE 100 Div Yield	10.6 (+0.3)
Bank of England Official Chart (nom)	
RPX	151.4 Dec 1997 Jan 1998 = 100
RPX	152.4 Dec 1997 Jan 1998 = 100

RECENT ISSUES

ARM VCT	100
Abbey Hall Dublin Inv	98
BFS Oases Inc & Gwth Cap	98
BFS Oases Inc & Gwth Inc	119
Close Bros Div VCT	100
Five Arts Ltd On 2040	107
Gander Properties	7
Jupiter En Zero Div Pl	108
Jupiter Enhanced Inc	99
Singer & Fnd AM VCT	100
Virtual Internet	200
Yeoman II Equity Units	100
Yeoman II Inv Pl	54
Yeoman II Inv Pl	97
Yeoman II Inv Pl	117

MAJOR CHANGES

RISES:	Stock	Close	Chng	Chng%
	Sean Hill	28.8	+23	+50.5
	Channing	149	+43	+40.5
	Colt	22.5	+5	+20.5
	Stakis	137	+3	+2.4
	Starm Pacific	94	+13	+18.8
	Arctech	72	+10	+15.0
	Tanaka	125	+12	+10.5
	Central Pacific	216	+28	+15.0
	Gynus	173	+25	+14.5
	J&A Higgs	139	+17	+14.4
	Hamleys	142	+16	+12.5
	St. Handford	77	+8	+12.4
	New Look	145	+16	+12.4
	Redemption	260	+28	+12.0
	Delphi	530	+57	+11.5
	NOT	381	+39	+11.5
	Allied Carparts	39	+4	+11.4
	Highgate	671	+68	+11.2
	Core Services	101	+10	+10.5
	North Anglia	185	+18	+10.7
	Peptide Thera	147	+14	+10.4
	Informa	343	+32	+10.2
	Hayes Farm	104	+9	+10.0
	PSD	417	+37	+9.8
	Tobal & Brin	359	+31	+9.7

FALLS:	Stock	Close	Chng	Chng%
	GEI Int	24	-21	-37.8
	Chivern	184	-19	-10.5
	Russell (A)	101	-15	-15.0
	AIM	127	-15	-10.5
	Counts Group	28	-3	-9.5
	MP	37	-3	-9.5
	Regional Int	17	-1	-6.5
	Salvage (C)	92	-7	-7.0
	P & O	107	-7	-6.5
	CDL Telecom	1170	-79	-6.3
	Swedish	149	-10	-6.5
	Allied Telex	105	-6	-5.8
	Daily Mail A	253	-20	-7.5
	Sun Life & P	501	-28	-5.3

TEMPUS

Chemical imbalance

IT ALMOST beggars belief. Imperial Chemical Industries used to be the core shareholding. From Throgmorton Street to Tunbridge Wells the initials ICI were synonymous with UK equity market investment. Can it really be that the fortunes of ICI are so bad, and the prospects so poor, that the time has come to cut the cord from the mother of all stocks?

Sadly, yes. Without the pharmaceutical excitement of Zeneca, ICI's commodity chemicals business has long looked weak. In a last roll of the dice new ICI bet the ranch buying Unilever's specialty chemicals for £5 billion. But disposals of the commodity chemicals side — required to pay off debt taken on to finance the Unilever deal — have not come quickly enough. ICI's ambitious programme to shake off its old persona hit the buffers when the US's Federal Trade Commission

blocked the £1 billion sale of its tioxide operation to DuPont. Last year it encountered a similar block over the £285 million sale of Croscott to WR Grace in the US. Now buyers are scarce and even if buyers can be drummed up ICI is unlikely to get as decent prices. Little prospect, therefore, for a speedy reduction of the £4.2 billion debt mountain.

And without off-loading the undesired commodity operations ICI cannot push ahead into its new areas. To be fair, progress with fine chemicals for use in fragrances such as Tommy Girl and Avon's Woman of the Earth lightened an otherwise gloomy set of results yesterday.

The unchanged 32p dividend supports the current share price but without a rapid turnaround future payments are threatened. Meanwhile, a rescue takeover seems unlikely.

Now it looks like Stakis shareholders will have the chance to exit, and the price could be a good deal higher than the market price of 137p currently indicates.

Stakis is in such good shape that Ladbrokes is unlikely to be alone in showing interest. Whitbread immediately springs to mind and encouragingly for Stakis holders, Whitbread has never knowingly underpaid for acquisitions — viz David Lloyd Leisure and

the UK Marriott hotel business. Ladbrokes's sighting shot is pitched at 140p. But shareholders should demand nothing less than 180p and the likelihood that their demands will be heard means there are quick profits for buyers here.

The appearance of Whitbread in the auction house will be greeted warmly by Stakis shareholders but even more likely that Ladbrokes will win control. If it does it also seems likely that Mr Michels will be hired by Ladbrokes — a former employer. And as long as Ladbrokes is allowed to make its offer, at least partly, in shares, that would give Stakis holders the chance to continue benefiting from Mr Michels's talents.

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The appearance of Whitbread in the auction house will be greeted warmly by Stakis shareholders but even more likely that Ladbrokes will win control. If it does it also seems likely that Mr Michels will be hired by Ladbrokes — a former employer. And as long as Ladbrokes is allowed to make its offer, at least partly, in shares, that would give Stakis holders the chance to continue benefiting from Mr Michels's talents.

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COMMODITIES

COFFEE	ICE-LOR (London 6.00pm)	CRUDE OILS (S barrel FOB)	GRN LONDON GRAIN FUTURES	LIFFE WHEAT (cassia 100)	LIFFE BARLEY (cassia 100)
Robusta Coffee	102.10/102.15	102.10/102.15	102.10/102.15	102.10/102.15	102.10/102.15
White Sugar (FOB)	102.10/102.15	102.10/102.15	102.10/102.15	102.10/102.15	102.10/102.15
Meat & Livestock	102.10/102.15	102.10/102.15	102.10/102.15	102.10/102.15	102.10/102.15
Commodities	102.10/102.15	102.10/102.15	102.10/102.15	102.10/102.15	102.10/102.15

LIFFE OPTIONS

Series	Call	Put	Series	Call	Put	Series	Call	Put	Series
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Community banking key to assault on social exclusion

Prosperous Britain must genuinely be beginning to believe that the experiment with an independent Bank of England is proving a success. The latest rate cut yesterday provided another boost for homeowners and businesses alike, leaving interest rates at their lowest level for more than four years.

Yet for all the emphasis on the machinations of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC), there is a substantial section of society for whom the latest rate cut will make little difference. The sink estates of the inner cities have been largely bypassed in the recent economic boom. With no mortgages and little access to bank finance, the inflation views of Eddie George are about as relevant as the financial crisis at the Royal Opera House.

In one of its bolder policy

moves, the Government has made trying to end the "social exclusion" suffered by those inhabiting the fringes of the British economy a top priority. It has pledged to spend £800 million over the next three years supporting policies designed to tackle traditional poverty issues such as homelessness and poor housing, through to the more recently identified problems of mobile phone deprivation and "shopping desert" areas.

Some 17 inner-city "pathfinder" areas have been identified to run pilot projects with the aim of rolling out successful start-ups to other areas. No less than 18 special action task forces have been established to provide policy support.

Only one action group, however, has been specifically charged with the fundamental task of devising ways of encouraging busi-

nesses back into no-go regions. Lacking the big names of many of the Government's more high-profile task forces, its work has gone largely unnoticed. Beyond Ed Mayo, the head of the left-leaning New Economics Foundation, the task force consists mainly of anonymous civil servants and voluntary sector workers with only Andrew Robinson, community manager at NatWest Bank, providing representation from the mainstream corporate sector.

The absence of widespread business representation on the social action task forces reflects a deep-seated failing that is as much the fault of Government as business. As Mr Robinson says, Britain has tradi-



ALASDAIR MURRAY

tionally approached social exclusion problems by throwing money at deprived communities. There is now a general acceptance that this has not only proved ineffective but may even have heightened the problem by creating grant depend-

ency. The new thrust of policy is to find ways for these communities to tap into the mainstream financing, to try to ensure long-term viability. It is no coincidence that Mr Robinson, a Canadian by birth, learnt his skills in the far more developed community banking markets of North America.

The US has long defined the need for adequate commercial finance as the root of the problem. The Community Reinvestment Act has attempted to arrest the drift into the suburbs by forcing banks to lend wherever they raise deposits, while niche community lending banks have sprung up in the inner cities.

The British Government has for

the moment backed off from making such community lending compulsory, unconvinced this would genuinely help many of the most deprived areas. Although about 20 per cent of the population does not hold a bank account, the Banks reiterate that only 1 per cent are ever refused an account and the problem is as much the reluctance of certain sections of the population to seek out a mainstream lender as any mass discrimination.

Mr Robinson believes that the experience of banks such as South Shore in Chicago will provide a far more useful model for bridging the funding gap. South Shore has developed a strong hold on central Chicago banking by developing a new risk model for the local home loans market. It found that strategic lending has a knock-on effect, encouraging nearby

householders to consider investing in their houses and, as the street improves, attracting businesses back into the locality. As Mr Robinson emphasises, for the US banks this is profit-driven rather than a charitable or PR exercise. Noticeably, NatWest is treating its community banking experiment as a marketing exercise rather than a charity project.

Profitable, however, does not mean that this form of banking will ever produce an acceptable rate of return. Niche community banks will be able to take some of the strain, but a nationwide solution will still require support from the large retail banks. The Government can try to coax and cajole, but ultimately a serious assault on social exclusion is going to need an immense amount of private sector goodwill.

Family ties that drive BMW forward

Sigrid Auferbeck reports on the emergence of a new generation at one of Germany's industrial dynasties

Bernd Pischetsrieder has had a long and distinguished career in German industry. Yet as the BMW chief executive faces the car and motorcycle maker's supervisory board today, he might reflect that his future is being determined by two factors — the unpopularity of Rover among British car buyers, and the influence of two billionaires in their thirties.

The feeling in Bavaria is that the decision that could end Herr Pischetsrieder's career at BMW, lies in the hands of Susanne Klatten and Stefan Quandt, the heirs of the family that controls BMW. Today's meeting will be the first significant move by the 36-year-old businessman and mother of three, and her 33-year-old brother.

The pair joined BMW's supervisory board two years ago. Along with Johanna Quandt, their mother, they hold 45.6 per cent of BMW's shares.

Despite their vast wealth, the two are regarded as being down-to-earth. Both would probably have succeeded in business, even without the benefit of the Quandt family name.

Susanne, who studied in Britain and has a BSc, started out in advertising before working at BMW and then in a bank. She went on to study in Lausanne, and, in 1988, became an assistant to the publisher Hubert Burda, a job she left to work with her husband — an independent entrepreneur — who spent some time at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in Boston.

Despite having three children, she manages to spend much of her time at the family's corporate headquarters, the Günther Quandt Haus (named after their grandfather), in the Hessen town of Bad Homburg.

Her brother's CV reads equally well. Stefan studied economics and engineering at Karlsruhe University, and then worked for the Boston Consulting Group in Munich for four months, before joining the family's Datacard Corporation in the US. What was planned to be a six months' secondment lasted almost three years, including time in Hong

Kong marketing Datacard. Since 1996 he has worked full-time at Bad Homburg.

Thanks to their father's desire to expose his children to every element of the Quandt family's diverse empire, both Susanne and Stefan are not merely involved in BMW.

Susanne is significant shareholder of Alzina, a pharmaceutical and chemicals company. Stefan owns Delton, a holding company whose subsidiaries include Van-Leack, the shirt producer, and Heel, which makes homeopathic remedies. Within Germany it is thought that this is a preparation for a career that should see him eventually become head of BMW's supervisory board.

If you own all these companies, and half of BMW on top of that, all you really need to do is cash in the annual dividend and spend the rest of the year shopping. However, the Quandt family prefers instead to concentrate on its policy of developing its fortune through conservative investments.

However, the bigger those companies become, the more difficult it gets to introduce capital for further expansion. If the family wants to maintain its position of authority at BMW, it has to reinvest each time the companies float new shares. That is only possible if the investment provides enough returns.

It is a problem that the Siemens family has had to face up to — with less success. After the Second World War it owned a fifth of Siemens, but now holds less than 2 per cent.

Both Susanne Klatten and Stefan Quandt have repeatedly emphasised that they intend to keep BMW independent, and have resisted all takeover bids, which have become in-



Bernd Pischetsrieder, the chief executive of BMW, who faces his supervisory board today

creasingly common. Among the "grooms around the bride" were Ferdinand Piech, head of rival carmaker, VW, who is still licking his wounds after losing the rights to the Rolls-Royce name to BMW.

This is because the Quandt family's relationship with BMW is not merely financial. The company might not even exist if it wasn't for the entrepreneurial guts of Susanne and Stefan's ancestors.

The family is descended from Dutch immigrants who settled and became wealthy from the textile trade in the Brandenburg town of Pritzwalk.

Günther Quandt — who lived from 1881 to 1954 — increased the family's fortune through clever investments in consumer products and batteries, which boomed during the 1920s and 1930s. He was a big backer of both Daimler-Benz, and BMW, which at that time made its name as a manufacturer of aero-engines and motorcycles.

After the war, with the Ger-

man aero industry in ruins, BMW focused on automobiles, which they had started building on a small scale during the 1920s. The postwar years saw legendary models, praised by designers, but which sold badly and nearly drove BMW out of business. Facing bankruptcy, the shareholders were presented with a takeover-bid by Daimler-Benz.

However, at a meeting in late 1959 that was to become legendary, the investors surprisingly turned down the bid, and as the management differed, Herbert Quandt, Günther's son, stepped into the breach. He provided the lion's share of the rescue capital and developed the company's strategy of building affordable, high-quality cars.

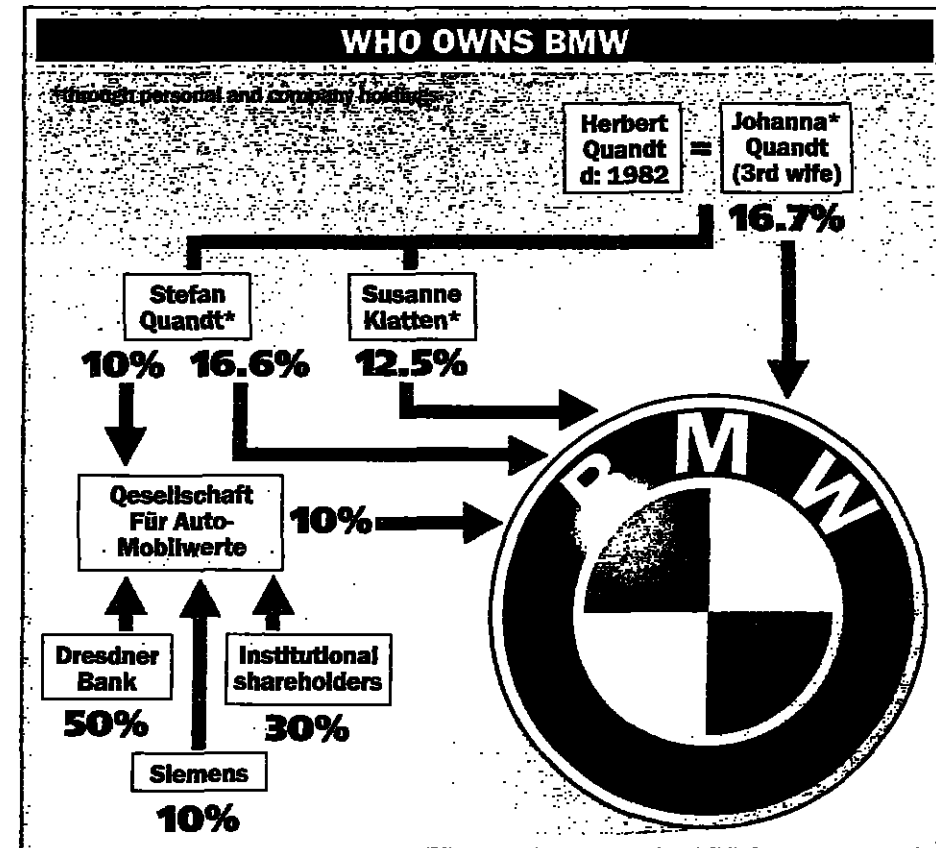
Before Herbert Quandt died in 1982, his billions were distributed among his six children from three marriages. His first daughter, Sylvia, a painter, was given a private income. Sonja, Sabina and Sven from his second marriage re-



Holding the Key: Susanne Klatten, right, with her mother, Johanna, second from the right, at a ceremony to commemorate the opening of the Herbert Quandt school in Pritzwalk, the town where the family comes from



BMW's headquarters, which is situated in Munich



IN Business life TOMORROW

Once more unto the breach dear friends: Management training with Henry V

Rome groan

OUR own dear BAA is poised to bid for the two airports serving Rome, the fifth-busiest in Europe if you combine their respective traffic volumes. If this happens it will be despite a bit of last-minute chauvinism from the part of some Italian MPs.

BAA — which I call British Airports Authority whenever I run out of pens, because they always sent you one with the right name on it in mute correction — is in with Carlo de Benedetti's holding company CIR. The Italian Parliament was yesterday to have sanctioned the sale of 54 per cent of the company that operates the

airports but does not seem to have got around to it.

BAA is therefore waiting for the official clearance to bid, at a cost of about £450 million. There has been strong opposition to the sale to any foreign concern. The presence of de Benedetti, who will have a minority stake, could lessen this, although any formal insistence that he be included would be contrary to the Treaty of Rome.

There is a second possible bidder, a consortium including Benetton, Pirelli and the fashion house Trussardi. A curious combination, and one hopes the wind is with BAA.

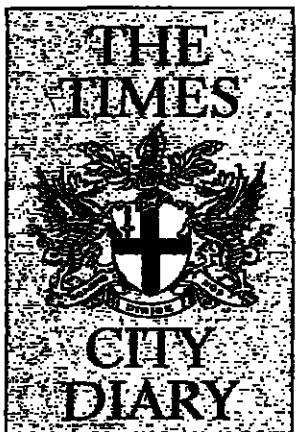


"Don't panic dear, we're in luck"

A CITY type arrived back from lunch the other day to find a note from a fairly new secretary that a regular contact had rung. So could he ring so-and-so "at Golden Sucks".

Double date

THE campaign by Marks & Spencer to endear itself to the City after the disasters of late last year has not started well. M&S has called retail analysts to its Baker Street headquarters for a briefing on the evening of February 18.



Unfortunately this is the day of the annual dinner of investment analysts at the Grosvenor House, a sacred date in any scribbler's diary as the investor relations people really should have known.

Retail analysts are less than happy. They will miss at least the pre-dinner GRTs and possibly the first course.

It all seems so like the M&S of old. Not only will the analysts start off feeling negative, it is unlikely many will be able to remember much of the briefing the next morning. Or be in any fit state to write it down.

Just the job

THE CV of Peter Bennett, one of those senior ING Barings executives who left in October after the resignation of chair-

man Marinus Minderhoud and the loss of 1,200 jobs, arrives on my desk. The much-travelled Bennett has just landed a job at JM, the information technology headhunter.

His career, as it is set out, is impossible to credit unless he has access to a convenient time machine. Furthermore, he doesn't ever seem to have joined Barings, let alone left it. Bennett admits that the account does, indeed, contain errors, and that they are his. So there you have it. The headhunter who could not draw up his own CV.

A READER has decided to renew the rental on his mobile phone. This was bought for £149 on one of those cheap "Pay Once For The Whole Year" deals. Vodafone attempts to charge him more than £200 for the next year's rental.

He points out that the latest one-year introductory offer is for just £129. What is to stop him from junking the earlier deal and taking up this offer, so saving more than £70?

Nothing. Vodafone confirms to me that it is indeed cheaper to throw away the phone and sign up for another one than to keep the old phone and rent it for another year. "It's called competition."

The most worrying thing is that only myself and the reader seem to see anything remotely odd about this.

Tiny tease

AN OLD associate of the late Tiny Rowland calls, amused by Lorrin's proposed change of name to Lorrin. He was with Rowland in Africa shortly after the end of white minority rule in Rhodesia and the change of name to Zimbabwe. Tiny met the new Zimbabwean president, Robert Mugabe, who suggested that the company change its name from Lorrin, as in London and Rhodesia, to reflect the country's new name. "Robert," said Tiny, "Whoever heard of a name like Lorrin? Nobody would take us seriously."

MARTIN WALLER
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Tongue-in-check Tiny Rowland won name game

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Muted response to rate cut

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
56	47	20	100	0	0	12
47	38	20	100	0	0	12
38	29	20	100	0	0	12
29	20	20	100	0	0	12
20	11	20	100	0	0	12
11	2	20	100	0	0	12

BANKS

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
161	150	100	100	0	0	12
150	140	100	100	0	0	12
140	130	100	100	0	0	12
130	120	100	100	0	0	12
120	110	100	100	0	0	12
110	100	100	100	0	0	12

BREWERIES, PUBS & REST

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
161	150	100	100	0	0	12
150	140	100	100	0	0	12
140	130	100	100	0	0	12
130	120	100	100	0	0	12
120	110	100	100	0	0	12
110	100	100	100	0	0	12

ELECTRICITY

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
161	150	100	100	0	0	12
150	140	100	100	0	0	12
140	130	100	100	0	0	12
130	120	100	100	0	0	12
120	110	100	100	0	0	12
110	100	100	100	0	0	12

BUILDING MATERIALS

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
161	150	100	100	0	0	12
150	140	100	100	0	0	12
140	130	100	100	0	0	12
130	120	100	100	0	0	12
120	110	100	100	0	0	12
110	100	100	100	0	0	12

CHEMICALS

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
161	150	100	100	0	0	12
150	140	100	100	0	0	12
140	130	100	100	0	0	12
130	120	100	100	0	0	12
120	110	100	100	0	0	12
110	100	100	100	0	0	12

CONSTRUCTION

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
161	150	100	100	0	0	12
150	140	100	100	0	0	12
140	130	100	100	0	0	12
130	120	100	100	0	0	12
120	110	100	100	0	0	12
110	100	100	100	0	0	12

DISTRIBUTORS

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
161	150	100	100	0	0	12
150	140	100	100	0	0	12
140	130	100	100	0	0	12
130	120	100	100	0	0	12
120	110	100	100	0	0	12
110	100	100	100	0	0	12

FOOD MANUFACTURERS

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
161	150	100	100	0	0	12
150	140	100	100	0	0	12
140	130	100	100	0	0	12
130	120	100	100	0	0	12
120	110	100	100	0	0	12
110	100	100	100	0	0	12

DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
161	150	100	100	0	0	12
150	140	100	100	0	0	12
140	130	100	100	0	0	12
130	120	100	100	0	0	12
120	110	100	100	0	0	12
110	100	100	100	0	0	12

ELECTRONIC & ELECT

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
161	150	100	100	0	0	12
150	140	100	100	0	0	12
140	130	100	100	0	0	12
130	120	100	100	0	0	12
120	110	100	100	0	0	12
110	100	100	100	0	0	12

ENGINEERING

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
161	150	100	100	0	0	12
150	140	100	100	0	0	12
140	130	100	100	0	0	12
130	120	100	100	0	0	12
120	110	100	100	0	0	12
110	100	100	100	0	0	12

INSURANCE

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
161	150	100	100	0	0	12
150	140	100	100	0	0	12
140	130	100	100	0	0	12
130	120	100	100	0	0	12
120	110	100	100	0	0	12
110	100	100	100	0	0	12

INVESTMENT TRUSTS

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
161	150	100	100	0	0	12
150	140	100	100	0	0	12
140	130	100	100	0	0	12
130	120	100	100	0	0	12
120	110	100	100	0	0	12
110	100	100	100	0	0	12

ENGINEERING, VEHICLES

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
161	150	100	100	0	0	12
150	140	100	100	0	0	12
140	130	100	100	0	0	12
130	120	100	100	0	0	12
120	110	100	100	0	0	12
110	100	100	100	0	0	12

MINING

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
161	150	100	100	0	0	12
150	140	100	100	0	0	12
140	130	100	100	0	0	12
130	120	100	100	0	0	12
120	110	100	100	0	0	12
110	100	100	100	0	0	12

LEISURE & HOTELS

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
161	150	100	100	0	0	12
150	140	100	100	0	0	12
140	130	100	100	0	0	12
130	120	100	100	0	0	12
120	110	100	100	0	0	12
110	100	100	100	0	0	12

HOUSEHOLD GOODS & TEXT

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
161	150	100	100	0	0	12
150	140	100	100	0	0	12
140	130	100	100	0	0	12
130	120	100	100	0	0	12
120	110	100	100	0	0	12
110	100	100	100	0	0	12

MEDIA

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
161	150	100	100	0	0	12
150	140	100	100	0	0	12
140	130	100	100	0	0	12
130	120	100	100	0	0	12
120	110	100	100	0	0	12
110	100	100	100	0	0	12

PHARMACEUTICALS

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
161	150	100	100	0	0	12
150	140	100	100	0	0	12
140	130	100	100	0	0	12
130	120	100	100	0	0	12
120	110	100	100	0	0	12
110	100	100	100	0	0	12

BRITISH FUNDS

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
161	150	100	100	0	0	12
150	140	100	100	0	0	12
140	130	100	100	0	0	12
130	120	100	100	0	0	12
120	110	100	100	0	0	12
110	100	100	100	0	0	12

SHORTS (under 5 years)

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
161	150	100	100	0	0	12
150	140	100	100	0	0	12
140	130	100	100	0	0	12
130	120	100	100	0	0	12
120	110	100	100	0	0	12
110	100	100	100	0	0	12

MEDIAN (5 to 15 years)

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
161	150	100	100	0	0	12
150	140	100	100	0	0	12
140	130	100	100	0	0	12
130	120	100	100	0	0	12
120	110	100	100	0	0	12
110	100	100	100	0	0	12

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OTHER FINANCIAL

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
161	150	100	100	0	0	12
150	140	100	100	0	0	12
140	130	100	100	0	0	12
130	120	100	100	0	0	12
120	110	100	100	0	0	12
110	100	100	100	0	0	12

RETAILERS, FOOD

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
161	150	100	100	0	0	12
150	140	100	100	0	0	12
140	130	100	100	0	0	12
130	120	100	100	0	0	12
120	110	100	100	0	0	12
110	100	100	100	0	0	12

RETAILERS, GENERAL

1996		Price £	+/-	Int. yld %	Gr. and pft	1998	
High	Low					High	Low
						129.86	114.90
						122.55	105.90

Read my lips and save our libraries

The curse of the lottery strikes again. You didn't know there was such a nominal with the *actualité*. The curse of the lottery is rather like that other great media amusement, the curse of *Flebot*, which appears to guarantee that rich and beautiful celebrities no sooner parade their health, wealth and generally mint-condition karma on the pages of that distinguished journal than they lose their lovers, fortunes, homes, hair and marbles — not necessarily in that order.

Well, the curse of the lottery is much the same, only duller. It works like this. A cultural institution is awarded a lottery grant equivalent to the gross domestic product of Portugal, or at least the callout charge for a North London plumber. A recipe for bliss? Not blooming likely. Within weeks its management will be in disarray, finances wrecked, employees revolting, punters outraged, reputation shredded. I don't need to cite examples. You know what they are, and if there is one thing worse than in-

truding on private grief it is gloating over national humiliation.

But one should warn when it is about to happen again — and it is. Only this time the curse of the lottery has blighted not some preposterously over-ambitious theatre, but the humblest and oldest servants of British mass culture: our local libraries.

I hesitate even to mention them. If 22 years in journalism have taught me anything, it is that little readers quicker than a worm-thy article about libraries. Ironic or what? But mention them I must, because they are in peril. The lottery curse has struck.

Last year the Government decided to allocate £70 million of lottery money to a scheme called "New Library: the People's Network". Yes, it's a ghastly Blairite touchy-feely cliché of a title, but the scheme itself is unobjectionable. By 2002 it will link all 4,000 public libraries

to the Internet, and (it is hoped) go as far towards bridging the gap between the "information rich" and the "information poor" with new technology as the Victorian lending libraries did with those old-fashioned things called books.

The only problem is: will there be any libraries left by 2002? This month local councils finalised budgets for next year, and horrible details emerged of cuts in the cultural area. Westminster City Council, for instance — not exactly a body battered by intractable social problems — has just slashed its grants to arts organisations by a startling 28 per cent, and blamed "asylum seekers" for forcing its hand. Since its patch includes English National Opera, the Serpentine Gallery, the Wigmore Hall and several other internationally renowned arts organisations, the consequences for the capital's cultural life are grim.



RICHARD MORRISON

But libraries have always been the most favoured soft target for overstretched councils. And here the proposed cuts add up to an appalling assault on literature and literacy. Barnsley is proposing to close 22 branch libraries; Surrey 16. At least 15 London boroughs will close libraries this year. Round the

country the story is the same. And don't forget that 500 libraries have already closed since 1990.

If libraries aren't closed, their hours are curtailed. Britain may now be a 24-hour society, but libraries seem ever more inaccessible to working people whose spare time falls in the evenings or at weekends. Little wonder that book borrowing is down — by 22 per cent in five years in Glasgow, for instance. Funds for purchasing books are also being slashed; a report this month found that book stocks in city libraries had declined by 28 per cent since 1993.

What makes this woeful tale rather odd is that we are supposed to be engaged in a big national push to get kids and adults reading. This is allegedly "National Year of Reading". Literacy hour has been instituted in schools. Supermarkets and factories are co-operating in book-lending schemes

for shoppers and workers. Newspapers, including *The Times*, are backing a plan to put more books into schools. *The Word*, billed as "London's first festival of language and literature", assembles a dazzling array of scribes and scribblers next month.

But what good is icing when the cake is rotting? The curse of the lottery is that people get distracted by the megabucks available for the grand project — in this case the "People's Network" — and neglect the boring but vital task of keeping their institution in day-to-day good health. In the case of the local library, we are talking not only about a place that lends books, records and tapes, but about one of the hubs of community life: a meeting-place, a civic noticeboard, a haven where kids from cramped and noisy homes can study in peace.

Going to the library is still the fifth most popular pastime in Britain. (The bad news is that the fourth most popular is "eating at a fast-food restaurant".) Abolish your local library, in other words, and you tear a gaping hole in that delicate cobweb called society.

At least the alarm has been sounded, albeit in sleepy fashion. Last Tuesday evening, while most people were transfixed by the England football manager and then things went to bed, a handful of MPs took part in an adjournment debate about library closures. It was useful to the extent that the Arts Minister, Alan Howarth, felt compelled to state that the Government "sees no justification whatever for cutting library services in the present financial climate".

Since his department is responsible for ensuring that local authorities fulfil their legal duty to provide "comprehensive and efficient" library services, these were encouraging words. Deeds must swiftly follow. Otherwise the curse of the lottery will rot our tree of knowledge at its very roots.

Music under our skin

Why is the London Philharmonic Orchestra planning to play at Caribbean parties in South London? Nigel Williamson reports

Stravinsky played back to back with polyphonic music from the African equatorial rainforest. A liturgical mass in Latin embellished with improvised Sufi meditations. Orchestra members dispatched into the urban sprawl of South London to play at Asian weddings and Caribbean birthday parties.

In the three years since he took over as chief executive and artistic director of the London Philharmonic Orchestra, Serge Dorny has created something approaching a cultural revolution on the South Bank. "I felt it was important for us to develop roots in the local community. They weren't aware of us and we weren't aware of them," he says.

It is this thinking which has led Dorny to launch *New Rituals*, a six-month programme in which his orchestra will spend much of its time at large in the community. A series of workshops will see LPO members interacting with groups from different cultural backgrounds in the surrounding boroughs of Southwark, Lewisham and Brixton. Together they will compose and create original music which will be performed in *Celebrating the Journey*, a

multi-media happening at Southwark Cathedral in July.

"We need to have a feedback from the community and to feed into it. We want to participate in its ceremonies so that, for example, if a Caribbean grandmother is celebrating her 75th birthday we can help to create some music that connects with that event. And in July, when all these different cultures are sharing the platform with the LPO, I hope it will generate a real synergy within the community."

The project, which Dorny has instituted as an annual event and placed at the core of the LPO's activity, kicks off this weekend at the Festival Hall with an illustrative day of *Roots-Classical Fusions*. After an afternoon of workshops featuring music from the Caribbean, Ireland, India, Japan, Argentina and Turkey, an evening concert will feature one of the most extraordinarily diverse programmes ever put together by a major British symphony orchestra — *The Rite of Spring* and Copland's *Appalachian Spring* intermingled with bobongo music from Zaire, and Machaut's *Messe de Notre Dame* accompanied by the haunting sounds of the Turkish ney, an ancient flute used for a thou-



Common ground with Stravinsky: women of the Polyphony Ekonda group from Zaire, who will be performing at the Festival Hall tomorrow as part of the Roots-Classical Fusions day

sand years by the whirling dervishes of Mevlevi Sufism.

"We want to bring in new audiences to experience music from different cultures and roots," says Dorny. "The stimulations of European and non-European music can be very similar. They often serve the same purpose. We are world citizens but that isn't reflected in our culture."

Which is why Dorny chose ritual music as this year's theme. "You can see the notion of ritual translated in world music and classical music using the same tools — primitive

rhythm, a certain kind of harmonies, repetitive figures, the climaxes, the cumulative patterns. Stravinsky and Copland did it and the Bantu people utilise the same tools for a similar purpose. Unless you juxtapose them you are not aware of it. There is a vast common grammar in ritual, both pagan and religious, and in the collectivity of the experience."

Perhaps the most intriguing fusion of all will be the interfaith adventure of Machaut's 14th-century Christian mass embroidered by Islamic devotional music. David James of

the Hilliard Ensemble, who will sing the mass, says: "Serge approached us when he first took over the LPO. He arrived with this vision to push back the barriers of music, which is exactly how we feel. We all assume classical music is the ultimate but when you get beyond Western Europe there is a whole other musical world full of ideas."

The Hilliard recently recorded a Swiss television show in which they were asked to improvise with singers from Mongolia and Azerbaijan. "It was fascinating how quickly it

came together. Even though they had different harmonic scales we had so much in common. At the end of the evening it didn't seem strange at all."

Dorny concedes that it will be a confrontation of cultures but one that he hopes will be entirely positive. "Sufi music not only shares a time period with medieval masses but has similar structures, even though the traditions are different. These are introductions which hopefully we can take

further. It can be a greenhouse for new music, new genres.

"The world must be like *Womad* are having an effect in regular concert halls although it might take another 10 or 20 years. Mozart and Brahms assimilated the music of different cultures. Now we have access to so much more, why can't we do the same?"

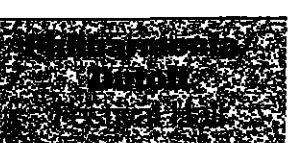
● *Roots-Classical Fusions* featuring the LPO conducted by Kent Nagano takes place at the Festival Hall (0171-960 4242) tomorrow

CONCERTS: French pleasures, a curious Scottish experience and a London homecoming

Surfeit of sweetmeat

Ten tasty morsels by the 100th birthday boy, Poulenc, on a slab of Milhaud, one pearl by Ravel: this was a death by chocolate concert. Most of this French music was meant for dancing, but the only one pirouetting on the platform was the conductor Charles Dutoit. At times the expressiveness of his dainty footwork, flexed shoulders and imploring arms outshone anything emerging from the Philharmonia. That was certainly the case during *Le Boeuf sur le toit*. Milhaud's pot-pourri of South American rhythms. But what can players do with little tunes sullied by smudged textures, or a structure barely held together by sticky tape?

Wisely, they moved on to something better: Poulenc's D minor two-piano concerto of 1932, one of his most ingratiating pieces, fusing Stravinsky, Mozart, Balinese echoes and



popular song. Here Dutoit had competition from soloists Katia and Marielle Labèque, who always offer a good vaudeville turn. Notes were stabbed at, bodies flung back. Their fortissimo hammerings sometimes did Poulenc no favours, but whenever the music turned still and tender they were there waiting, minutely delicate in the gamelan sounds at the first movements close, child-like and loving in the second's mock Mozart.

After the interval we gathered for another chocolate feast, the five-movement suite from *Les Biches*. Poulenc's ballet written for Diaghilev. The orchestration may lack the con-

certo's finesse, but Dutoit made the most of the toyhorn tunes, honking brass, and gooey harmonies. It was all delightfully insouciant.

What a relief, nonetheless, when Ravel's second suite from his own Diaghilev ballet, *Daphnis et Chloé*, a genuine masterpiece, closed the concert. Woodwinds bubbled over the stream, bird violins woke into song, and the sun rose as this *Daybreak* movement began, it was clear this was the piece the Philharmonia had been waiting for. Earlier, their playing had been two degrees under. Now they did much more than play the notes: they cradled them, polished them, especially Kenneth Smith's solo flute. But enough French chocolates, please. I am now on a diet.

GEOFF BROWN

Factory fun

Cathedrals in Sound is what the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra calls its Bruckner series in Greyfriars Kirk. Actually, it's more like visiting a factory where Bruckner symphonies are manufactured, where slabs of brass are winched on rumbling cables and welded together, great beams of wood hammered into position, masses of wires woven into crackling high-voltage circuits. It's noisy but also, in the middle of it all, exhilarating.

Greyfriars is not the biggest of Edinburgh's churches. With the orchestra occupying roughly half the floor space and leaving room for fewer than 400 people it is clearly no answer to the problems of the RSNO, but for a broadcasting orchestra it has interesting possibilities. Although Bruckner is obviously pushing at the extremes of an acoustic



that might have been designed for Bach, there is little music that would not benefit from the clear atmosphere of Greyfriars Kirk.

Sitting on the factory floor with the Sixth Symphony was an overwhelmingly direct Bruckner experience. Why it is that variations in pace seem all the more significant in close-up is difficult to say. But the interchanges between the two main tempi of the first movement — which Takuo Yuasa made as different as he reasonably could while making no special effort to ease the transitions — were awesomely perilous and all the more effective for that. In compensation, unfortunately, the reiterations of the three-note proclamation on the heavy brass at the end of the last movement seemed grotesquely over-insistent and too ponderous by far.

At the same time, however, there was no trace of scepticism in the playing of the orchestra, which seemed to be as deeply committed as it was well prepared, and no failure in confidence in the conducting. Yuasa had his strategy and he was sticking to it, with the least fruitful results in a not very spontaneous slow movement but with dynamic effect in the Scherzo and a massive accumulation of both acoustic and structural capital in the end.

BARRY MILLINGTON

GERALD LARNER

Return of the natives



orchestra was joined by Sarah Chang, the youthful prodigy now all of 17. Chang lost no time in making her mark, with a full-blooded, folk-inflected opening paragraph. Thereafter outbursts of furious velocity alternated with oases of calm reflection, the soloist equally responsive to both. The sharp wit, vibrant colour and riotous abandon of the finale make for a volatile mix, but drawing on reserves of rich

tone, vibrato and solid technique, Chang carried all before her. It was an impressive performance and a continually engaging one, thanks to the empathetic interaction of soloist, orchestra and conductor.

As though to prove that touring had taken no toll, the players delivered a high-voltage and superbly executed account of Beethoven's Seventh Symphony. The symphony was famously described, by Wagner, as "the apotheosis of the dance", but the driving rhythms and fierce propulsion of this performance emphasised raw energy rather than choreographic grace. There was suavity too in the Allegretto, and a welcome touch of buoyancy in the Scherzo. But with Davis sculping vast edifices in the air as the accumulated power of the finale was exhilaratingly released, there was no mistaking the air of triumphalism.

KATE WINSLET SAID TAGHMAOUI

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POP PROFILE

Upwardly mobile Cleo

Like it or not, they're comin' atcha

Forget Queen of the Nile. At the rate they're going,

Cleo Higgins are set to rule the world. Paul Sexton reports

Cleo Higgins hears a knock on the hotel room door. Cleopatra's lead singer and songwriter is getting restless for her creature comforts, and somebody is going to know about it. "Please tell me that's my ice cream," she says, politely. As a display of pampered showbusiness temperament, this is hardly a scene from *All About Eve*.

The first year of fame for Higgins, 16, and her two sisters Zainam, 18, and Yonah, 14, might have been enough to turn even wise old heads, never mind those of the three ingenious talents in an archetypal rags to riches tale. But in the week that they add their own children's television series to their inventory of achievements, they are showing an almost stateswomanlike calm about their upward mobility. Oh, and also talking about boys and giggling a lot.

The girls have found a space in their multi-media promotional schedule to be startlingly normal, well-adjusted, vivacious teenagers. They are more likely to twitter about who they fancy and what tunes they love than to harp on about their three consecutive Top Five hits, their Best British Newcomer nomination at the forthcoming Brits, opening for the Spice Girls on the latter's British stadium tour, or getting faxes from Madonna, no less.

But the perfect demonstration of how a bankable commodity can be put in front of every potential young fan comes this very afternoon. With channel-hopping dexterity, the trio will leap straight from episode one of *ITV's Comin' Atcha*, their seven-part comedy-drama vehicle, to an appearance on BBC's *Blue Peter* to plug their upcoming single, *A Touch of Love*. It's their first ballad, but these precocious minstrels still come

across as funky enough to make even Shep get down. Myriad further bookings are due, on everything from Channel 4's *Bigger Breakfast* to the Disney Channel. Nor must we forget their own website. Comin' atcha indeed.

The Showbiz Family Higgins was delivered in Birmingham, but it was after their mother Christine, herself a session singer, decamped with the girls to Manchester's notorious Moss Side that their potential became unmissable. "I started writing poems when I was about four or five," says Cleo. "Some of them were so good that Mum didn't think they were mine."

"I've got only one friend, who I've known for seven or eight years. Instead, I have associates"

What began as sing-songs with mum in the kitchen soon became a local attraction at youth clubs and parties. When Cleopatra became an apparently overnight success, this time last year with *Cleopatra's Theme* they had in truth been polishing up their act for six years. But even these three sunny maidens found that fame had a darker side.

"I never used to get detention," says Yonah. "But then when they found out I was in Cleopatra, I was on report straight away."

Cleo adds: "You get people saying they're your cousin, or if you babysit for someone once they say you were their personal babysitter."

Even if success doesn't change you, it can work some voodoo on the people around you. "We live across the road from a load of fans," Cleo says, "and this morning I went to the local Spar to buy some chicken for my Mum. In the shop they were shouting 'It's that girl from Cleopatra.' And there I am just walking down the street trying to be as normal as possible."

As the eldest sister, Zainam comes over as the voice of prudence. As Cleo chirruped confidently about still knowing who her friends are, Zainam cuts her short with impressive pragmatism. "You will know who your friends are, when or if Cleopatra disappear," she says. "I've only got one friend, who I've known for seven or eight years. Instead, I have associates. These so-called associates don't want to talk to me, or they only want to talk to me because of what we're doing. Associates that I haven't seen since school, all of a sudden they're phoning the house."

In America, Cleopatra are signed to Madonna's Maverick label, and they talk about her like a favourite, hip auntie. "She sends us faxes to say the single's doing well or whatever," says Zainam. Written personally? "Well, I think it's her. We don't actually know her handwriting."

Domestically, the support staff is headed by their omnipresent mother, their managers and tutor, the doubtless long-suffering Barry. How goes the studying, then? "Three hours a day, same as usual," says Cleo world-wearyly, and then asks me for a little help with her homework: "Do you know what pi stands for?" They attend a minimum of 15 hours of lessons per week and even Zainam is voluntarily continuing her studies. Far from being distracted by for-

ARTS

NEW POP ALBUMS

Chuck comes up for air



It's a great life being part of Cleopatra, even if you have to pose with a large cardboard cut-out of a television set.

Terrific Italian job

INSTABILE ORCHESTRA

Italian Instabile Festival

(Leo CD LR 262/263)

THIS 19-piece Instabile Orchestra is one of the glories of European jazz. A genuine democracy, yet holding in its ranks some of Italy's most celebrated musicians, it is routinely referred to as a free-jazz ensemble, but incorporates into its richly textured music everything from graceful folk melodies and snatches of opera to witty references to the blues and banda traditions.

This double CD captures the orchestra live in the Teatro Verdi, Pisa, and as an introduction to the band's range and virtuosity it could not be bettered. Woosily eccentric, rowdy ensembles jostle with small group free jazz and the odd solo feature: the most elegant of clarinet airs are succeeded by irreverent trombone pieces or live electronic duets. Given

NEW JAZZ ALBUMS

that the French were granted a day at last year's London Jazz Festival, and that the Swedes are presently here in force, Italian jazz, arguably the most vibrant in Europe at present, surely deserves a UK airing.

VINTAGE JAZZ

Trust Me, I'm A Builder

(PEK Sound FKCD-110)

WITH the modest amount of media attention jazz attracts so firmly focused on youthful prodigies, cutting-edge avant-gardists and the odd mature legend, it is easy to forget that there is a thriving market for the sort of traditional, New Orleans style music Vintage Jazz plays. Recorded live at last year's Bude Festival, clarinetist Harry Brampton—a high, sweet, agile player with a deliciously woody sound in the lower registers—and the suitably sassy brass pairing of cornetist Dave Stradwick and trombonist John Shelley lead a vigorous sextet through a lovely selection of useful blues, stomps and the odd piece of cheerful bawdiness.

CHRIS PARKER

Arise, Charles the second

CHUCK E. WEISS

Extremely Cool

(Slow River/Rykodisc)

SRRC41 £12.99

EXTREMELY cool is a bit of an understatement as far as Chuck E. Weiss's career is concerned. His profile has been so high that the dark lines under his eyes and the gruff, well-travelled tone of his voice, you might think that he had been cryogenically frozen since he released his first album 18 years ago.

Still, no one could accuse the man who inspired Rickie Lee Jones's hit of 1979, *Chuck E.'s in Love*, of going off at half-cock, and this much-delayed follow-up is a cracker.

Aided and abetted by his long-suffering friend Tom Waits, Weiss has whipped up a rich and ragged brew of bar-house blues, boho-jazz and Chuck Berry-style rock'n'roll on numbers ranging from the nimble swing of *Sonny Could Lick All Them Cats* to the slow, midnight-in-the-alley *Cumbe of Deeply Sorry*. Best of all is *It Rains On Me*, a salty singalong written and performed by Weiss and Waits with a heroically dilapidated swagger. "This is how the world will be/Everywhere I go it rains on me", they wail as a lone kick-drum struggles to keep the song on its feet, and a down-at-heel blues takes on a magical twist.

BABYLON ZOO

King Kong Groover

(EMI 7243 4 97280 £12.99)

"ALL the money's gone", sings Jas Mann with a knowing smirk on the Babylon Zoo single of the same name, released last week. To his evident embarrassment, most people have missed the intended irony, and simply assumed that

POP ALBUMS: What do you get if you

wait 18 years for a Chuck E. Weiss

LP? A treat, says David Sinclair

he is telling the truth. For while Babylon Zoo's celebrated single, *Spaceman*, may have sold in dizzying quantities three years ago, the bandwagon quickly faltered, and that initial success was not translated into subsequent sales of Babylon Zoo's debut album, *The Boy With the X-Ray Eyes*.

Now Mann is back for another bite of the cherry. But if the market was resistant to his group's first album, which was actually rather good, it will take a miracle to get *King Kong Groover* off the ground. A collection of hand-me-down glam-rock themes given a slight Robbie Williams-meets-Oasis twist and sung in a foolish David Bowie-type drawl, this is an album bereft of inspiration, originality or wit.

"A starman fell from outer space", he sings in *Manhattan Martian*, a portentous ballad with an unbelievably threadbare lyric airing a theme which recurs with diminishing returns in *Honey-moon in Space* and *Chrome Invader* ("Cosmic kid with the latest moves/He's a crazy dude").

Elevating a workaday cover version of Mott the Hoople's *Hondolockie Boogie* to third track on the album gives an accurate indication of the paucity of worthwhile material to

follow. Instead of reaching for the stars, Mann has fashioned an album that is destined to join similarly hollow offerings by Transvision Vamp, Shampoo and Stiltskin in the bargain bins of the 1990s.

TV SMITH

Generation Y

(Cherry Red)

CDMRD 151 £10.49

IT IS hard to think of who from among the first wave of British punks has disgraced themselves less in middle-age than TV Smith, previously the singer with the Adverts. While former members of the Sex Pistols and the Damned et al have degenerated into caricatures, Smith has quietly grown in authority while remaining true to his misfit origins.

The title track of *Generation Y* finds him "Standing here with hands on hips/In a ditch by the super-highway", a perennial outsider and now

WEISSER

Chuck E. Weiss: www.rykodisc.com

TV Smith: www.bv1361.com/people/tvsmith.html

Tatiana Ali: www.sony.com/usa/uk

Cleo: www.cleopatramusic.com

TELEVISION: Top of the Pops, BBC1, Friday, 7.30pm

TOTP2, BBC2, Saturday 4.30pm

TOP TEN ALBUMS

- (1) You've Come a Long Way, Baby — Fatboy Slim (Shink)
- (2) You Been Expanding Your — Robbie Williams (Chrysalis)
- (3) Talk on Corners — Corn (Virgin)
- (4) Stop On — Steps (Vive)
- (5) Forgiven, Not Forgotten — Corn (Atlantic)
- (6) Lovers & Strangers — The Roots of — George Michael (Epic)
- (7) Where We Belong — Boyzone (Polygram)
- (8) American — Offspring (Columbia)
- (9) Big Willie Style — Will Smith (Columbia)
- (10) The Misadventures of — Lauryn Hill (Columbia)

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Figure in brackets indicates last week's position

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Jeff Randall, the Editor of *Sunday Business*, is due in court today to discover whether he is guilty of contempt in relation to an article on masons in the City

EU may try to ban sweet and toy ads

MAKERS of sweets and toys are alarmed at a threat by the European Union to ban television ads for under-12s, and the Advertising Association is launching a campaign to fight it. Campaign reports that a ban is already in place in Sweden, and that the Swedes are expected to try to extend it across Europe when they take up the EU Presidency in 2001. It would hit the revenues of television channels, especially at Christmas.

BLOODLETTING at Disney Channel UK, as two executives leave after less than a year. Joan Lof, the director of programming and acquisitions, and Amelia Johnson, the head of creative, both handed in their notices last week. Broadcast says reports of rows over strategy are denied by the managing director, Paul Robinson, formerly of Talk Radio.

TANGO fruit drinks are to be relaunched because of a 10 per cent drop in sales, says Marketing Week. The manufacturer, Britvic, will spend £13.8 million on marketing, including a £9 million advertising blitz, and a new flavour mixing pineapple and grapefruit. Tango is still the bestselling fizzy fruit drink, with double the market share of its closest rival, Lilt.

CHANNEL 4, having snatched Test cricket coverage from the BBC, now has its eyes on the 2002 Commonwealth Games in Manchester. The BBC has broadcast the Games since 1954, and Broadcast says that Channel 4's expression of interest could start a bidding war, with a price of up to £12 million.

NEW magazine projects reported by Press Gazette include: *New Eden*, a gardening magazine for "funky people", from IPC; *FBX* (For Boys Exclusively), for 7 to 11-year-olds, from

BBC Worldwide; *Rock Sound and Freeway*, covering rock music and custom bikes, both from Freeway, which already publishes both titles in Europe.

CHANGING FACES — who's going where: Pat Roberts Cairns steps down as the Editor of *Good Housekeeping* but remains a consultant; Tom Collins quits as the Editor of *Irish News* to be communications director at Queen's University, Belfast (*Press Gazette*); Liz Harlow leaves WH Smith to manage Jigsaw, the new marketing consortium for Cadbury-Schweppes, Unilever and Kimberley-Clark; Capital Radio's managing director, Martina King, is talking to

ITV sales house TSMS about a job; Christopher Masters, the marketing chief at Mondex, joins Visa International as European head of strategy (*Marketing*); Ruth Pitt, Granada's head of documentaries, is to be the Editor of BBC's *Everyman* series and director of productions at Real Life Productions; Andrew Bell leaves BBC radio news to be political editor for 5 News on Channel 5 (*Broadcast*); Donna Zurcher of National Media Corporation is to head the UK office of Ogilvy & Mather; John Russell, of the American Chamber of Commerce in Brussels, will head Shandwick's EU public affairs (PR Week).

MOVING HOUSE — who gets the business: Mars appoints Duckworth Finn Grubb Waters to advise on the launch of a top-secret children's food range (*Marketing*); Jones Mason Barton & Antenen wins £15 million account for cable company Telewest; Swiss engineer ABB is reviewing £10 million account held by McCann-Erickson (*Marketing Week*).

MICHAEL LEAPMAN

Up against the odds

Jeff Randall, Editor of *Sunday Business*, will find out today whether he is guilty of contempt. A row has broken out over an article in this week's paper which "outed" senior masonic figures in the City of London. In an earlier interview, Randall joked that he was "ankle-deep" in letters of complaint from masons and that he was probably on "a masonic hit list". Yesterday he was called to Kingston Crown Court to explain why the paper had referred to an ongoing fraud case, involving one of its "outed" masons. Randall has been told to return to court today to hear the verdict of Judge Maclean.

It may not be the most significant story the paper has carried in its 12 months on the streets, but publishing a list of senior masonic members in the Square Mile has certainly put *Sunday Business* in the spotlight. That story featured in a burst of radio advertising last weekend, marking the

Jeff Randall is sailing close to the wind as Editor of *Sunday Business*. Raymond Snoddy finds out why

the media interview

start of a promotional campaign that will run until Christmas. The ad push seems to be working. "Sixty-three thousand, eight hundred and sixty-two copies," says Randall with the relish of a man enjoying success after many had felt that finding space for a stand-alone Sunday business newspaper at the top end of a crowded market was an impossible task. "That's the first time (last Sunday) we have been over 60,000." He believes "break-even" sales of 80,000 are coming into sight.

This Sunday, the paper owned by the Barclay brothers should get another modest boost to circulation when it enters the Scottish market for the first time. The launch there will coincide with the first issue of the *Sunday Herald*, the new Glasgow-based paper from the Scottish Media

Group. "We are hoping to give our sister paper, *Scotland on Sunday*, a little bit of help by confusing the issue," says Randall, former City editor and sports editor of *The Sunday Times*. Rather cheekily, they plan to ride on the advertising for Scotland's new Sunday. For some time, Randall has been looking longingly at the possibility of perhaps 5,000 sales in the Edinburgh financial community, but thought it couldn't be done. The paper is printed on the Portsmouth presses of the Portsmouth and

Sunderland Newspaper group and *Sunday Business* felt that it was too far from Portsmouth to Glasgow and Edinburgh to truck newspapers. But on realising that lorries were bringing the Barclay brothers' daily, *The Scotsman*, south to London, it was agreed that the vehicles could meet halfway to exchange papers.

A further jump in sales to coincide with the anniversary of the paper's launch — on Sunday week — would certainly make Randall happy.

The Barclay brothers — multimillionaires David and Frederick — bought the *Sunday Business* title from the receiver after it had become something of a joke. It was so under-capitalised at the original launch almost three years ago that money had to be hunted down just to pay the first week's printing bill.

Randall took comfort from the fact that the owners had a long-term view and would not start worrying about cashflow after six weeks. "They saw it as a three-year project," he says. "It is likely to cost the Barclays a total investment of £20 million to take the paper into profit, with losses of £6 million in the first year, £4 million in the second, £2 million in the third."

The Editor's main worry at launch was that the *Financial Times* would move against him with a Sunday edition of its own. "Can you imagine what the FT could have done with its brand, its distribution, its network, its authority, its track record?" It didn't happen. Indeed, Randall has heard that Marjorie Scardino, Pearson chief executive, apparently concerned at *Sunday Business* squaring in its domain, has asked consultants to take a look at the paper. Randall was also wary about the "robust and competitive spirit" of his former employer, News International, which owns *The*

Times. The worst that his rivals got up to, he says, was spreading a rumour with advertisers that sales had fallen to 17,000. In fact, they bottomed out at 35,000. After three months of bumping along at that figure, sales started to rise and the paper's ABC circulation figure for November was just over 50,000.

It is clear that *Sunday Business* enjoys growing acceptance in its core business and financial market. "I feel obliged to read it. I think it's done quite well," says Anthony Fry, a merchant banker with Credit Suisse First Boston. "The *Independent on Sunday* is a waste of time and *The Mail on Sunday* has lost it. I put *Sunday Business* alongside *The Observer* and behind both *The Sunday Times* and *The Sunday Telegraph*."

Randall must attract more people like Fry, those not usually in the office on Sunday who may instead be at their country home. Advertising will help. In future, all ads will be story-led and as far away as possible from the disastrous launch campaign which billed Sunday as the "first day of the working week" — making potential readers miserable by threatening them with work when they were trying to enjoy themselves. He believes that supermarkets have played a vital role in increasing sales. There has been a noticeable "bounce" in sales on the last Sunday of the month, a phenomenon he attributes to the middle classes going to supermarkets after pay day to buy groceries — and a copy of *Sunday Business*.

This year Randall will target airlines, hotels, restaurant chains and golf clubs. He plans to take the paper to France, The Netherlands and Germany. From worrying that he would make a complete hash of being a newspaper editor, he is starting to daydream that just may be, a circulation of 100,000 might one day be possible. And dreaming of the profits such a circulation would bring.

"I didn't want to bottle out of taking the job as editor"

Justin gets the upper hand

HE was judged "too push" in the BBC's great debate about who should front its main bulletins to maximise audiences and promptly consulted his lawyer. Now I hear that Justin Webb, the former Breakfast TV presenter packed off to Radio 4's *The World Tonight*, is to be rehabilitated. He's about to be posted to Brussels, as the BBC's Europe correspondent. A public school education is not being held against him for such a post.

As programme editors struggle to make budgets balance in a third year of cuts, Tony Hall, the unpopular chief executive of BBC News and candidate for director-general, has turned to J Walter Thompson to advise on ways of promoting its brand better. *News 24* (share of viewing 0.05 per cent) is certain to be overhauled.

NO nonsense about "revenge is a dish best eaten cold" where journalists are concerned. David Montgomery's bizarre management methods over a

£15 million project to relaunch *The Sporting Life* were detailed by *The Observer* last Sunday in a score-settling piece by John Mulholland. Its joint deputy editor, the subtext: when Monty sacked Mulholland last summer from *The Sporting Life* editorship, the row erupted across the press and no pay off was forthcoming. Mulholland landed his current job shortly afterwards

and has been pondering suing the group. Now triumphant Mirror Group chairman, Sir Victor Blank, is being asked to smooth things over in the time-honoured way.

THE *Daily Mail* has worked itself into a lather over the Downing Street plan to by-

how Margaret Thatcher was forced to admit, on a Radio 4 phone-in, that the *General Belgrano* was sailing away from the Falklands when she was sunk? I bet Blair prefers the bosom of the lobby any day.

THIS month should settle the question of who will be third string *Newsnight* presenter, with Jeremy Paxman and Kirsty Wark. Gordon Brewer is out of the running, leaving David Aaronovitch, Jeremy Bowen and Martha Kearney in the brains parade. The hot money is on Bowen, although Kearney may emulate Sue MacGregor's career switch to current affairs.

THE bad press for Vanessa Feltz never ends. She is rightly fingered as helping to trigger the crisis engulfing BBC Pebble Mill in Birmingham, where departments are being wrecked. The Birmingham centre has long been a harbour for day-time programming, but as a condition of

switching from ITV, Feltz insisted her new show come from London, where she lives. Combined with the loss of other programmes, the result is that the two main studios at Pebble Mill are being used at 20 per cent and 40 per cent of capacity, which points to closure. "It's proof that the market just doesn't work. We just can't abandon production in the English regions," says a senior BBC executive. A working party, under chief executive Will Wyatt is trying to sort it out.

I SPENT an illuminating day at a City seminar on the future of radio, with Ralph Bernard, David Mansfield, Richard Huntingford, Tim Schoonmaker and Richard Findlay, chief executives of the UK's five main commercial groups (GWR, Capital Radio, Chrysalis Radio, Emap Radio and Scottish Radio Holdings). They are all fuming at the way the Radio Authority, currently issuing three to four new station licences a month, has failed to award a single new licence to any of them. They're gunning for Sir Peter Gibbins, the former *Guardian* executive who now chairs the authority.

Run for rhinos in the London Marathon

Today *The Times* offers readers the chance to win one of the last ten available places for the Flora London Marathon on Sunday, April 18. The lucky winners will have two choices: to join an elite group running in rhino costume, or just run in normal wear, raising money to save the rhino.

By raising funds for Save the Rhino International (SRI), you will be helping to provide funds for the translocation of black rhino to a protected area in Tsavo East, Kenya; reconstruction of anti-poaching camps destroyed by floods in India; and equipment for anti-poaching units in Namibia.



HOW TO ENTER
Simply write your answer to the following question on the completed entry form below:
How many horns does the Indian rhino have? Send it to: Save the Rhino International, Winchester Wharf, Clink St, London SE1 9DG. Entries must be received before Saturday, February 13, 1999. Normal TNL competition rules apply.

THE TIMES/RHINO TEAM ENTRY FORM

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How much money could you realistically raise by running the marathon for SRI? _____

Granada bids for schools' channel

Granada Television has emerged as clear favourite to win a £100 million five-year contract to launch a revolutionary interactive digital television channel linked to the six "core" GCSE subjects.

The channel, due to start in the autumn, is being developed by the Department for Education and Employment together with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, and will be the most ambitious educational project to use the digital television technology. The aim is to have a channel dedicated to educational material on English, French, Geography, History, Double Science and Maths.

Granada, which already has a learning division as well as being one of the biggest commercial broadcasters, is in competition with United News & Media and the BBC in tendering for the contract.

Lord Hollick, chief executive of United, which has

three ITV licences as well as publishing *The Express*, has been gradually moving into education. A subsidiary of United Broadcasting, Anglia Interactive, has been producing curriculum-based material for some time, first for CD-Roms but now mainly for the Internet. United is also in a consortium with the Welsh Fourth Channel and the cable company NTL to launch digital terrestrial entertainment services.

The extent to which the BBC is interested in the project in its current form is not clear. The corporation is already planning to launch a general Learning Channel in the spring on digital terrestrial television.

Granada is believed to have put considerable work into its application. It is a 50 per cent shareholder in ONdigital, the main commercial digital terrestrial broadcaster, and would clearly see the contract as a way to promote digital "blackbox" receivers. The aim would be to have a digital receiver in every school.

But the prize would be to persuade parents to buy digital receivers for their homes.

Most of the material for the channels is likely to be specially produced. Over time, databases of material on the six subjects would be built up — including, perhaps, presentations by the best specialist teachers.

Previous initiatives in using television in distance learning have had mixed results. The Open University has had a significant television component from the outset, but the Open College retreated from television because it was too expensive. Digital has been a significant factor in reducing costs.

According to the latest Education Department figures collated nine months ago, 85 per cent of secondary schools in England are connected to the Internet but only 17 per cent of primary schools.

RAYMOND SNODDY

A scoop that all reporters should take care to note

In the story of Glenn Hoddle's downfall, accurate reporting by a Times journalist proved crucial



Matt Dickinson, the Times sports journalist who broke the Glenn Hoddle story



Glenn Hoddle speaking at the news conference at which it was announced that his contract as England coach had been terminated

As the controversy surrounding his interview with the former England football manager Glenn Hoddle mounted on Monday, Matt Dickinson was summoned to meet Peter Stothard, Editor of The Times.

That morning Tony Blair had raised the stakes by offering his opinion that Hoddle ought to go, but with the crucial proviso that his remarks on the disabled had been accurately reported. Hoddle meanwhile was still insisting he had been misrepresented.

Stothard needed to satisfy himself that The Times had not misrepresented Hoddle and that his defence of Dickinson was sound. Several reputations were at stake. So as Dickinson sat with his notebook in a taxi to Vapping he knew he faced a High Noon interview that would ruin either his career or Hoddle's. It was one of several moments of panic he experienced since his interview was published in The Times last Saturday.

Dickinson was going through the rare experience for a journalist — shared most recently by The Guardian reporters who dared to challenge Jonathan Aitken's "sword of truth" — of being the author of a story that suddenly erupted into a national controversy on which everybody had a view, which threatened the career of a powerful national figurehead and which called into question his motives, veracity and professional skill.

The irony of it all was that the Hoddle interview was arranged through the

Football Association itself after a call from the acting chief executive David Davies to sports editor David Chappell. The FA had detected a note of hostility in The Times's assessment of Hoddle and was on a charm offensive before next week's match against France.

When the England manager rings you at home, you stand to attention. So when Hoddle got through to Dickinson on his third attempt last Thursday, Dickinson didn't have time to set up his tape-recorder. He grabbed his notebook and pen and started asking questions, initially about English football.

When he turned to the subject which was unwittingly to lead to Hoddle's downfall, there was no doubt in his mind that Hoddle's comments were on the record. Dickinson prefaced his questions by saying that Hoddle was on record in another newspaper as holding his beliefs in reincarnation. The England manager proceeded to amplify them. He could easily have refused.

A report of Hoddle's comments was made the second lead on Saturday's front page, with the interview on the front page of the Sport section. Once the first edition was published, its news value was instantly evident to other editors. The story also made the front pages of Saturday's Daily Telegraph and the Guardian, an inside page of the Daily Mail and became the splash in The Sun, The Mirror and The Express.

After that it took off on its own. On

Sunday The Observer, obviously advised by Downing Street, led on a report that "Cabinet ministers" thought "Hoddle must go" and the story also featured on The Sunday Telegraph and The Independent front pages. It dominated the news agenda until Wednesday morning. It wasn't long on Saturday before Dickinson knew that his job was on the line, especially after Hoddle went on the BBC's Football Focus to defend himself. Dickinson found his professional reputation



called into question. His family rang to tell him that he'd all been called a liar. There were 50 messages on his answerphone. That was one low moment. Another was when Hoddle announced that he would be issuing a writ. It was not until Tuesday that his moment of vindication arrived when Hoddle himself, in an interview with Harry Harris of The Mirror, admitted that he had not been misquoted.

"The reporter from The Times did not misquote me but he did misinterpret me," Hoddle said. "The point I wanted to make was that there has to be some reason why some people are poor and star-

ving and others are rich and well-fed... why some people have the terrible misfortune to be born disabled... There has to be some reason for it all. The idea that we have all lived before and that those who were wicked or evil in past lives are not blessed with happy lives is not mine. It is one of many theories and one that is held widely by some religions. Believe me, reincarnation was not something invented by Glenn Hoddle. I am not sure about it but some of it makes more sense than just dismissing the unfairness in life as the luck of the draw."

Given the controversy over Dickinson's report, this was a critical text in which Hoddle had a second stab at explaining his views. The first edition headline in The Times on Saturday was "Hoddle says disabled are paying wages of sin". Allowing for the compression required of headlines, "wages of sin" was undoubtedly emotive (and amended to "price of sins" in later editions) but defensible given what Hoddle said in his Mirror defence. Both The Guardian and The Daily Telegraph used the word sins in their Saturday headlines.

Some critics believe that it was Dickinson and The Times who brought about Hoddle's downfall. Surely the fault lies with Hoddle himself? As the veteran columnist Ian Wooldridge wrote in the Daily Mail, Hoddle wasn't sacked for sharing his metaphysical beliefs but for being dumb enough to reveal them to BBC ra-

dio and a "thoroughly reliable" reporter. "Anyone with a grain of intelligence would know they were terminally offensive to the sick, handicapped and underprivileged."

Sensing a fellow journalist's reputation at stake, many of Dickinson's rivals sent messages of support but Dickinson says, nevertheless, that he takes no pleasure from Hoddle's downfall, even though he did not consider him a good coach. "I certainly don't feel smug or exhilarated. It wasn't fun to get somebody the sack."

He also had several moments of "utter paranoia" as he found himself in the role of hunted instead of hunter and caught in the blinding light of 50 flashbulbs. His 15 minutes of fame brought one moment of black comedy when a woman on the Tube recognised him from TV and began berating him about reincarnation. Dickinson's main regret with hindsight is that he did not have time to find and use his tape-recorder. At least, unlike many reporters, he had Teeline shorthand, learned to 100wpm at the postgraduate journalism course at Cardiff.

The moral for young journalists is that the old-fashioned skills of good reporters — one of which is shorthand — still count, as Ian Hargreaves, the former editor of The Independent and New Statesman, who is now professor of journalism at Cardiff, testifies. Shorthand isn't obsolete, he says. It remains indispensable. It certainly saved Dickinson's career when he met the Editor on Monday.

THE PAPERS' HYPOCRISY

The reaction of The Sun to the Hoddle saga was instant. Hoddle should be sacked immediately, it said. "Every day he stays on is an insult to every disabled person in the nation."

The Mirror was not so sure. Hoddle's remarks were described on its front page as a "slur" but its chief football reporter Harry Harris managed to get to Hoddle himself on Friday night and reported his view that he'd been "stitched up" — "Someone owes me an apology for misinterpreting my beliefs." By Monday, however, The Mirror was certain: Hoddle should go. "The fact that he has not resigned confirms his insensitivity and shows an arrogance unbefitting the coach of our national football team." The England manager needed stature, sensitivity and intelligence. "Glenn Hoddle fails on all counts."

By Tuesday, when it had an exclusive interview with Hoddle by Harris (in which he confirmed the accuracy of Matt Dickinson's report), The Mirror had changed its mind. Honest Hod was now worth one last chance. "Yesterday The Mirror, like most papers, called for him to resign because we believed he meant the interpretation put on his words by The Times. Today



Hoddle speaks to The Mirror

we have listened to his fuller explanation and we have altered our view." That view altered yet again on Wednesday. What he had said about reincarnation was clearly offensive to disabled people and the Football Association had acted decisively.

The Daily Telegraph argued consistently that although Hoddle's views might be those of a crank, he should be judged as a football coach. But it could not resist a dig at The Times which it said had tried to "board the tabloid bandwagon".

The Daily Telegraph reported the Hoddle saga on its front page on Saturday, Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. It had leading articles on Hoddle, op-ed articles and pages about him in the sports section. A case, perhaps, of the pot and the kettle.

Eileen Drewery, the faith healer who inspired Hoddle's beliefs, said after his downfall that it was the press who had destroyed him.

David Lacey argued in The Guardian: "The most damning quote of the reincarnation business has not been Hoddle's garbled rhetoric but Drewery's earlier assertion that you have to accept that a lot of people come back to earth to suffer." To some this might suggest that she has influenced him in a manner unhealthy to his position as an England coach.

Pressure? England have it easy, really

England managers may have trouble with the press but it goes with the territory, says Brian Glanville



Alf Ramsey in 1966, shortly before winning the World Cup

Glenn Hoddle, during this week's tribulations, may have felt as a former England manager, Bobby Robson, did in Mexico City in the summer of 1985. The scene was a press conference in the England team's hotel. Having snarled at a photographer who, he thought, was showing him at an unflattering angle, Robson said: "Pressure? There isn't any pressure. If you people didn't exist, my life would be twice as easy and twice as pleasurable."

That Hoddle should be undone by a newspaper interview when he had expressed much the same sentiments about karma and the disabled on BBC radio last May, with no reaction, seems primarily the stuff of... karma.

For Hoddle's relations with the press have never been good, from the moment he took over as England coach. Not that they had been idyllic when he was managing Chelsea. Even then, with far less pressure, there was a certain sullenness about him, a tendency to respond peevishly to questions.

With England, he made it plain that he didn't, in his own words, "give two monkeys" what was said and written about him. Well, nor did the most successful England manager of all time, Alf Ramsey, yet his basic contempt for the press never quite deteriorated into the antagonism Hoddle has engendered.

Football journalists felt that they were given scant co-operation during the 1998 World Cup — though they had still less from Bobby Rob-

son in 1990, in Italy. Nor did Hoddle endear himself to journalists by being economical with the truth about injured players who suddenly and miraculously recovered.

But nothing did quite as much to undermine Hoddle's press relations as his links with Eileen Drewery, who may perhaps be seen as the true cause of his present predicament. It was surely Mrs Drewery's muddled ideas that he was exorcising in that notorious interview. It was Mrs Drewery, the public landlady cum spiritual healer, whose famous pronouncements had alienated journalists, some of Hoddle's players and many spiritual healers. Mrs Drewery claimed to have had a "one to one with God" and to have prevented Ian Wright from scoring against Italy in a 1997 World Cup eliminator to prevent violence after the match.

It was surely under her influence that Hoddle made some of the most ludicrous pronouncements in his ghoulish World Cup Diary — whose serial rights he sold for £250,000 to the very paper he had most exoriated, The Sun. The same Mrs Drewery whom he astoundingly compared to Jesus Christ — just a "run of the mill" chap who could perform miracles. Bobby Robson, too, produced a lamentable World Cup diary after

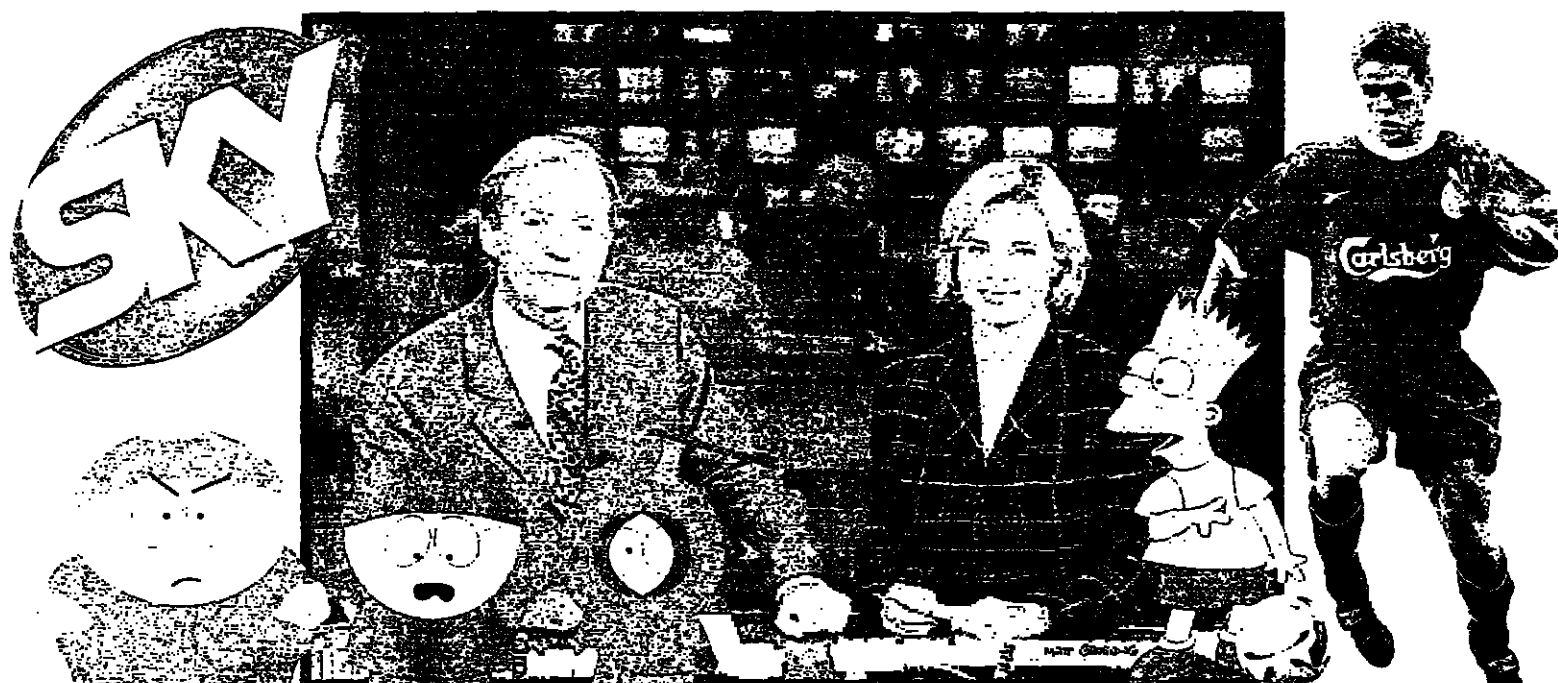
didn't prevent it rallying round him when he was dismissed in 1974. The coup d'état, engineered by the late Professor Sir Harold Thompson, a notorious intriguer and future FA President, was harsh, although Ramsey, winner of the 1966 World Cup, had seemed a spent force. Ramsey's greatest antipathy was for foreign journalists, who returned it after his outburst in 1966 at Wembley, following a quarter-final against Argentina. In the semi-final, he said, he hoped that England would meet a team which wanted to play football "and not act as animals".

Few realised that the Argentine players had urinated in the dressing-room corridor and had tried to break into England's team room. On England's 1969 pre-World Cup tour, Ramsey, having said how important it was to establish good public relations, chased Mexican journalists down the dressing room tunnel in Guadalajara.

Looking back it seems astonishing that Walter Winterbottom, England's first manager, should have been so gently treated in his reign between 1946 and 1962. A reign which included the 1-0 defeat against America in the 1950 World Cup in Brazil, and the two thrashings by Hungary, 6-3 at Wembley in 1953, 7-1 in Budapest in 1954.

The truth is that by comparison with Italy, Spain and the South American countries, England coaches even now have a relatively easy ride. And none has yet shown his posterior to the press as did Javier Clemente of Spain.

05/17/11/11/11



Sky viewers have been fed a diet of sport, news and US shows such as *The Simpsons* and *South Park*, but a more Britain-friendly approach is needed now

Sky must reinvent itself

Ten years ago today when Sky Television was born it was difficult to take seriously the claim at the launch ceremony by Rupert Murdoch, chairman of The News Corporation, that a revolution was under way and that TV would never be the same again. It was indeed impressive that four new channels — doubling the number then available — came on air at exactly 0pm that day as scheduled. The programmes, however, looked as if they had been thrown together at the last minute.

Most people focused, perfectly reasonably, on the fact that it was almost impossible to get a satellite dish and hence there were hardly any viewers to watch the launch of the "revolution". Before long, British Satellite Broadcasting would be arriving with its Squarish, better pictures and more sophisticated technology — and then the competition would be formidable. Nobody then really knew how eager British



Raymond Snoddy

viewers would be to pay for multi-channel television since the four existing channels catered for so many tastes. As we watched the new service that evening my son, then seven, understood the concept straight away: "Does this mean, Dad, that we will be able to watch sport all the time?" That ultimately is the point about multi-channel television, whether through cable, satellite or digital terrestrial — the capacity to devote entire channels to different programme genres for enthusiasts who are willing to pay.

Despite the rows and controversies over pricing and allegations of overpricing aimed at Sky, there is no doubt it was Sky that kept cable alive in the early days when there was no other source of decent programming. It is equally clear that without Premier League

properly financed terrestrial channels available to all. Sky One, for example, the most popular of the Sky channels, has a 1.5 per cent share of the audience compared with 29.5 per cent for BBC1, according to figures from the Independent Television Commission. In the past, with the exception of news and sport, Sky has largely been a vehicle for imported programmes, mainly American. That is changing: Sky One has set a target of 50 per cent original programming within the next two years. Sky has also formed its own production company, Sky Pictures, which will invest £80 million to produce 20 theatrical-releases films. For Sky to have greater impact in the future, it will have to increase considerably its investment in original British production so it really does look more like a mainstream British broadcaster.

London is 'TV news capital of the world'

Britain has trumped the American networks, says Stewart Purvis, chief executive of ITN

London has replaced New York as the capital of the world's television news business, a shift of power that has taken less than ten years. American comedies and popular drama may be flooding into Britain but British television news is reversing the flow of funds across the Atlantic.

At the start of the Nineties, the square mile near Central Park which housed all the network headquarters was the place that mattered in television news. British executives looked to New York to take the lead on how a big international story was to be covered on the ground and on the screen.

Today there is almost an "Anywhere But New York City" syndrome, even for Americans. NBC has put its affiliate service, News Channel, in Charlotte, North Carolina, and its main news desks are now in New Jersey. The fading power of the networks and their home city dates from the Gulf War. The networks did not have a good war. They spent a lot of money but were outmanoeuvred by CNN, the upstart from Atlanta.

CNN built its reputation by having correspondents in front of live satellite links, but left much of the frontline picture-gathering to other broadcasters, particularly ITN, with which it had strong relationships.

New York newsrooms had always looked down on their European counterparts. They seemed to think that if New York wasn't covering a story, then the story did not matter. CNN, however, which suffered from none of the corporate excesses of Manhattan, needed to build bridges and do coverage deals.

In a realignment of alliances after the Gulf War, British and American news organisations made judgments about old partners and began a whirlwind of divorces and second marriages. ABC broke with ITN and went with the BBC, which spurned its traditional partner NBC. NBC, in turn, began to work mostly with ITN, which also built its links with CNN. CBS, which until then had worked on the basis that as the world's leading television news organisation it didn't need to be in an alliance with anybody, finally joined up with Sky News, which also found a sister network in Fox News.

For the first time commercial judgments were made in what had previously been an old pals "swap shop" of news video. Partners tried to put a value on each other's content

and services, money started changing hands and mostly it started coming this way across the Atlantic. British news gatherers were doing more news-gathering around the world than the Americans. ITN pulled its coverage out of a mainly American-owned agency and began selling the rights directly to other broadcasters.

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'Erotic television has gone too far'

The creator of *Eurotrash* claims Channel 5's sex-based programming is irresponsible, says Chris Ayres

Peter Stuart is television's original king of trash. The quiet, bespectacled American, is the brains behind Channel 4's *Eurotrash*, a programme almost entirely devoted to sexual innuendo and toilet humour, and a string of similarly tacky shows, such as *Badass TV* and *The Girlie Show*.

Without Stuart, it is unlikely that Michael Grade, the former head of Channel 4, would ever have earned the title of "Britain's Pornographer-in-Chief".

Yet Stuart, who is about to launch another risqué Channel 4 series, called *Le Show*, believes that "erotic programming" on terrestrial television has gone too far. Indeed, he openly criticises David Elstein, head of Channel 5, who was attacked last week by the Broadcasting Standards



Pioneer: Peter Stuart

Commission over his station's sex-based programming. "What I see on Channel 5 is soft-core porn at its very worst and sex journalism at its most irresponsible," he says. "However, I think *Eurotrash* did usher in a new era of eroticism on British television, and help to open a lot of doors that should have been opened."

He is aware, however, that many may find his criticism of Channel 5 rather hypocritical, given the sexually charged content of *Eurotrash*. "But *Eurotrash* is first and foremost a comedy show," he says. "No sex items make it in unless there is a human element. We wouldn't do a piece about a porn movie, for example, but we would do a piece about the first porn musical."

This formula has been astonishingly successful. The last series of *Eurotrash*, which ended two weeks ago, attracted 3.1 mil-

lion viewers on Friday nights, beating both Chris Evans's *777 Friday* and the cult American sitcom *Frasier*. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that Channel 4 has just commissioned 17 new shows of *Eurotrash*, to end on New Year's Eve 1999. Meanwhile, Stuart's production company, Rapido TV (partly owned by Richard Branson's Virgin Communications), has seen sales almost double this financial year to £9 million.

"In this age, where sex television is the thematic wallpaper of late-night schedules, *Eurotrash* is getting its highest ever ratings," Stuart says. "It is raising its sordid little head above all those other programmes. That's proof to me that it is a well written, subversive and witty little show."

Stuart, 38, is keen to emphasise that Rapido TV does not earn all its money from *Eurotrash*. The company was founded ten years ago in Paris by Stuart, the son of the American documentary maker Mel Stuart, and by Antoine de Caunes, the dapper French comedian who presents *Eurotrash*. Rapido's first productions were arts documentaries for Channel 4's *Without Walls* series. Only later did Rapido produce the series of tacky, sex-obsessed shows that formed the backbone of Channel 4's late-night schedule in the mid-1990s.

Yet Rapido TV's output is still diverse. It is currently producing a programme for disabled people, called *Freak Out*, and a new series starring the cult comedian Dennis Pennis. The company also produces educational programmes. Its most recent success was the Bafta-award-winning *Channel Hopping* (aimed at teaching 14 to 19-year-olds to speak



The faces of *Eurotrash*: the designer Jean Paul Gaultier, left, who co-presented earlier shows with Antoine de Caunes. "No sex items make it into *Eurotrash* without a human element"

French, starring the comedian Eddie Izzard. The programme is now part of the national curriculum.

Stuart, a self-confessed Francophile, admits to being on a mission to improve the image of the French with the British. "One of the most subversive things *Eurotrash* did — forgetting all the sex and scatology

— was to show British people that French people had a sense of humour," he says.

Like many Americans, Stuart has a mixed attitude towards the British. He is writing a film, to star de Caunes, about his experience with British bureaucracy: it will be called *Mad Dogs and Frenchmen*. "The story comes from

when I had a dog in Paris and couldn't bring it over to Britain because of immigration laws," he says. "So I took it to northern California, where it died. I was so angry at the stupid, snobbish, arrogant, Victorian, uptight British attitude. It is my life vendetta against Britain. That inspired me to write the film, in which Antoine will

play a dog smuggler." The film will be funded by the French media company Pathé.

Le Show, which will also be shown on Friday nights on Channel 4 in April, is essentially a variation on the *Eurotrash* theme. Yet there are differences: while *Eurotrash* is a tongue-in-cheek series of mini-documentaries, *Le Show* is

part chat show, part comedy sketch show and part vaudeville, hosted by de Caunes. As Stuart says: "I want it to be a big brassy Eurotainment show."

The pilot is rather hit and miss, but there are some funny moments, such as a spoof version of *The Jerry Springer Show* ("My husband is an existentialist. And I always thought he was a classical empiricist"). It will also feature celebrity interviews, although it is not clear who would be stupid enough to sign up. As Stuart says: "We are not interested in what the celebrity has to say. I think celebrities are just as bored with celebrity interviews as the public is."

Getting it right for nurses

AS WITH other recent advertising "briefs from hell", there appeared to be little that advertising could do for nursing recruitment in the face of daily negative PR.

Unlike the case of the Millennium Dome, however, the announcement of double digit percentage pay increases for new recruits gave the Department of Health the hook upon which to hang an ad campaign.

However, between the decision being taken to make the pay award and the commercial going on air after *News at Ten* on Monday, there was an almighty kick-bollock-scramble at Saatchi & Saatchi, the nursing ad agency.

The ad features Rachel, a patient recovering from a serious accident and unable to talk. All she does is stare blankly into the camera — for an uncomfortably long time. The spell is broken only by a flicker of recognition at the voice of the nurse who has been caring for her. Text on the screen reminds us that "nurses make a difference".

Viewers are then encouraged to dial a hotline number to find out about either returning to nursing, or training to become a nurse. Only then is there a discreet reminder that pay has improved.

If you look closely you can tell how little time the agency had. Agencies often spend six months coming up with a creative treatment of a talking head addressing a locked-off camera, but not here.

The script had to be simple. There was no budget for big effects or sexy locations — but then we are talking about attracting young nurses to the NHS. What's more, it all had to be done in a week.

What is hidden well is the behind-the-scenes debate as to how much to make of those rises in the ad itself. Simply to claim that nursing had changed because of the award would have been too patronising, even for this Government. Nevertheless, the agency couldn't ignore the rises; it

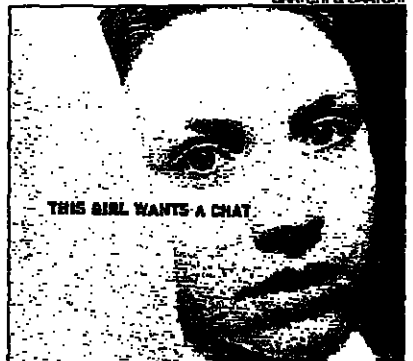


had to feed off the accrued PR to legitimise running a campaign at all.

The resulting campaign is an attempt to strike a balance between the emotional reasons why people have historically chosen nursing as a career, and the Government's new pay message. It amounts to an extraordinarily difficult task carried out with tact and emotional appeal.

■ There has been much talk about the role of the Nationwide Building Society's marketing director, Michael Lazenby, in Glenn Hoddle's downfall.

Would Hoddle have gone without the intervention of the likes of Tony Blair and Tony Banks. Who can now say? What is clear is that once the Football Association's new sponsor, Nationwide, started speaking out, Hoddle was doomed. The FA, fresh from Green Flag



'Rachel': nurses make a difference

ending its arrangement, could not afford another disaster.

Lazenby himself will have learnt a little about the dangers of being quoted this week. The trade magazine *Marketing* interviewed him about the Hoddle affair and asked him to explain his current apparent preference for sponsorship over television advertising.

"When people are watching television they see adverts, but they are not really watching them," he said. Now, while not quite in the Hoddle league of gaffes, it wasn't too clever for the marketing director of a company that has spent between £8 million and £15 million a year for the best part of a decade.

It will make fascinating reading for the agencies pitching for the Nationwide advertising account, after the recent acrimonious split with its former agency Leagas Delaney. Inevitably, Lazenby was quoted in *Campaign* the next day, trying to squirm his way out of his own words. The irony was not lost on many.

■ The Superbowl imploded this year with the help of a sex scandal and a one-sided game. But, as usual, the real battle took place in the endless ad breaks during Superbowl-related programming.

In an event that has become a byword for excess, Anheuser-Busch excelled itself. The Budweiser brewer paid an astonishing \$20 million for ten 30-second slots during the game, keeping out its rival Miller, an official sponsor of the NFL.

Miller had to make do with slots in the two-hour pre-game show and the two-hour post-match analysis. But who got the rougher deal? Miller can console itself with the thought that Anheuser-Busch paid a premium of 54 per cent over last year for the same positions. Joe Sixpack will have to buy an awful lot of beer to make it worthwhile.

● Stefano Hatfield is the Editor of *Campaign*

THE UK commercial radio industry saw its total advertising revenue increase to more than £420 million in 1998, according to figures just released by the Radio Advertising Bureau (RAB).

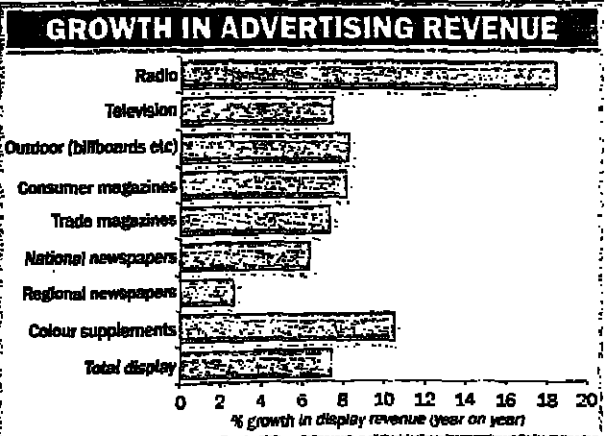
This represents an annual growth of 18.6 per cent, or £60 million, as well as being the biggest revenue figure achieved by the industry. This growth is set against a 7.4 per cent year-on-year growth in the display advertising market for January-September 1998; full annual figures are not yet available.

Commercial radio is looking

to achieve a 5.4 per cent share of display advertising for 1998 and is on target, according to the RAB.

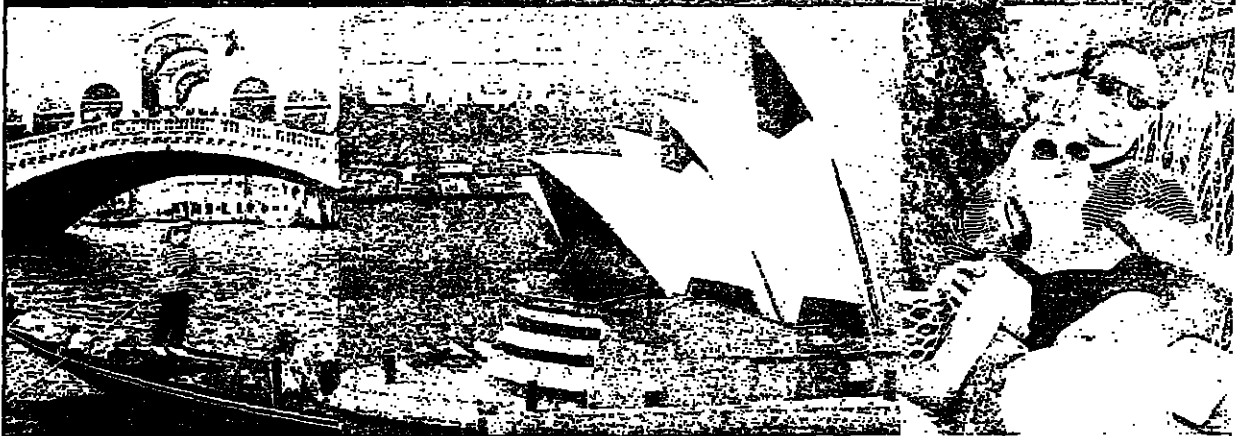
The growth in commercial radio revenue has been attributed to increasing interest from national advertisers who spent 27.3 per cent more on the medium last year than in 1997. National revenue accounted for 61.4 per cent of annual income.

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£1,500 to £1,999	£231	£158	£105	£45
£2,000 to £2,999	£240	£160	£110	£50
£3,000 to £3,999	£300	£200	£140	£60
£4,000 to £4,999	£360	£240	£160	£80
£5,000 to £5,999	£420	£280	£180	£90
£6,000 to £6,999	£480	£320	£200	£100
£7,000 and above	£540	£360	£220	£110

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Law Report February 5 1999 House of Lords

Landlord's discount after liquidator's disclaimer

In re Park Air Services plc

Before Lord Slynn of Hadley, Lord Lloyd of Berwick, Lord Hope of Craighead, Lord Hobhouse of Woodborough and Lord Millett (Speeches February 4)

When a solvent company which was a tenant of property under an onerous lease went into voluntary liquidation and the liquidator disclaimed the lease, the landlord, in proving for his loss in the liquidation, had to submit to an appropriate discount for accelerated receipt to reflect the present value of the rents and other payments which would have accrued in the future but for the disclaimer.

The House of Lords so held in allowing an appeal by the liquidators of Park Air Services plc. Vivian Murray Blair-Stewart and Nigel Ruddock, against a decision of the Court of Appeal (Lord Justice Nourse, Lord Justice Potter and Lord Justice Mummery) (The Times May 14, 1997; [1997] 1 WLR 1376) by which it allowed an appeal by the landlord, Christopher Moran Holdings Ltd, from Mr Justice Ferris ([1996] 1 WLR 649) on the landlord's originating application seeking a determination of the debt the landlord was entitled to prove for in the liquidation.

Section 178(6) provides: "Any person sustaining loss or damage in consequence of the operation of a disclaimer under this section is deemed a creditor of the company to the extent of the loss or damage and accordingly may prove for the loss or damage in the winding up."

Mr Terence Etherton, QC and Mr Peter R. Griffiths for the landlord; Mr Jonathan Sumption, QC and Mr Richard Adkins, QC, for the liquidators.

LORD MILLETT said that since the disclaimer operated to bring to an end both the tenant's liability to pay rent and the landlord's right to receive it, the landlord could not prove for future rent. The tenant's obligation to pay it had gone.

Since that was the consequence of an act which was authorised by section 178 of the Insolvency Act 1986, the landlord had no right to claim damages at common law for his loss. Instead section 178(6) gave him a statutory right to compensation.

That was normally measured by reference to the difference between the rents and other payments which the landlord would have received in future but for the disclaimer and the rents and other sums which the disclaimer would enable him to receive by reletting.

But the subject matter of the landlord's proof was compensation for loss of his right, inter alia, to future rent, not the rent itself, to which he no longer had any claim.

The amount of that loss had to be assessed. That involved giving credit for the receipts which the disclaimer would enable him to obtain by reletting. Thus even the undiscounted amount of the landlord's proof did not represent the aggregate amount of the rents and other sums which he would actually have received but for the operation of the disclaimer.

There was no justification for employing a different approach in the assessment of compensation than would be employed if the claimant were claiming damages for breach of a contract which had been wrongfully terminated.

In assessing damages in such a case, however, allowance would have to be made for accelerated receipt of any sums which had not fallen due at the date of breach, and which the contract did not make immediately due and payable in the event of breach. An award of compensation which failed to take that into account would overcompensate the claimant.

The Court of Appeal rejected the liquidators' argument that the question should be approached simply as a claim for damages for breach of an ordinary commercial contract in which the claimant was seeking compensation for the loss of future income, although that was what the language of section 178(6) indicated.

Instead, the Court of Appeal regarded the landlord as a secured creditor, his security taking the form of a right to re-enter and recover possession for non-payment of rent and to distrain for unpaid rent.

That enabled the Court of Appeal to treat the landlord as a secured creditor, his security taking the form of a right to re-enter and recover possession for non-payment of rent and to distrain for unpaid rent.

The short answer to that was that a landlord was not a secured creditor within the meaning of section 248 of the 1986 Act. Section 248 defined "secured creditor" as a creditor of the company who held a security over the property of the company. A secured creditor who did not realise or voluntarily surrender his security had to put a value on his security and prove only for the balance as an unsecured creditor.

None of those provisions was capable of applying to the landlord's right of re-entry. That was not a security interest subsisting in the tenant's property, nor was it capable of being realised by the landlord. It did not secure the performance of the tenant's liability to pay rent, which remained unsatisfied as well after re-entry as before.

It could not be valued or surrendered. If the lease was disclaimed it was not voluntarily surrendered by the landlord but brought to an end by the liquidator without his consent.

Once it was disclaimed, the right to re-enter was gone together with the right to future rents payable which it was supposed to have secured. It was a very curious security which was liable to evaporate just when it was needed.

Having thus circumnavigated section 178(6), the Court of Appeal applied rule 11.13(3) of the Insolvency Rules 1986 No 1928, which was concerned with the proof of debts payable at a future time, to the landlord's proof of debt.

Rule 11.13 was a curious provision, newly introduced in 1986, when interest during the winding-up was for the first time made payable on debts proved in the winding-up. Its effect seemed to be that there was no discount for accelerated receipt of a future debt in a solvent winding-up.

Mr Justice Ferris was plainly right to hold that that rule had no application to a proof submitted by a landlord pursuant to section 178(6). Such a proof was not a proof for a debt of which payment was not due at the date when the company went into liquidation.

At that date the landlord was not a creditor in respect of any loss or damage arising in consequence of the disclaimer, for the lease had not then been disclaimed. That was why section 178(6) only deemed him to be a creditor. Nor did he afterwards prove for a debt of which payment was not due at the date of the declaration of a dividend.

He proved for the statutory compensation to which he was entitled by virtue of the section. That was not a right to a future payment. The claim remained to be quantified; but subject thereto it was a present right to immediate payment.

The landlord's argument attached great importance to the alleged anomaly of applying a discount to its claim in respect of future rents and not to the proofs of other creditors in respect of future debts. Both, the landlord submitted, suffered the loss of a future stream of income.

But there was no anomaly.

The Court of Appeal evidently considered that the landlord could, but for the disclaimer, have proved for the future rent and recovered it without discount. But in practice he could not have proved for the future rent. He would have had to wait until the rent fell due and then prove quarter by quarter.

That was because rent was not a simple debt. It was the consideration for the right to remain in possession. The tenant's liability to pay future rent depended upon future events.

Rent in respect of a future rental period might never become payable at all. Rent payable in future under a subsisting lease could not be treated as a series of future debts making up a pure income stream.

There was a critical distinction between contracts which had been fully performed by the creditor and contracts which remained executory on his part.

The creditor who had lent money which had not been repaid or supplied goods or services which had not been paid for or proved in respect of a debt. If the debt was not yet due at the date on which a dividend was declared, the dividend was subject to adjustment under rule 11.13.

The creditor who had contracted for payment for goods or services still to be supplied by him, however, was not and might never become entitled to payment. He could not sue or prove in respect of a debt.

His Lordship drew attention to

the respects in which the drafting of rule 11.13 appeared to be seriously defective.

For more than a hundred years provision had been made for future debts to be discounted at the rate of 5 per cent per annum in order to arrive at their present value.

The process of discounting involved applying the discount to the reducing amount of the debt, thus arriving at a sum which, invested at compound interest, would equal the nominal value of the debt at the date when it fell due.

Rule 11.13(2), however, applied the discounting formula to the full, that is, unreducing, amount of the admitted proof. Such a process would reduce the proof to zero after 20 years, and at no stage yielded an amount which, invested at 5 per cent compound interest, would equal the nominal value of the debt at the date fixed for payment.

The second respect in which the drafting appeared defective was in relation to the amount and priority of the discount to be added back where the company was solvent.

Obviously the first priority was

to satisfy the principal amount of the debts, including the discounted value of any future debts. Once those had been satisfied in full, one would expect the amount of the discount from the date of the liquidation to the date of final distribution to be paid pari passu with the interest payable during the winding up to other creditors.

Instead, however, the creditor whose proof had been discounted recovered the full amount of the discount, not to the date of final distribution, but to the date, possibly still far into the future, when his debt would have fallen due for payment; and he recovered that, not pari passu with the interest payable to other creditors during the winding-up, but in priority to such interest.

It was difficult to believe that had been the intention of the Rules Committee.

Lord Slynn, Lord Lloyd and Lord Hope agreed. Lord Hobhouse delivered a concurring judgment.

Solicitors: Memory Crystal; Lawrence Graham.

Substituted service on indemnity fund

Abbey National plc v Frost (Stephen Leonard), Solicitors' Indemnity Fund Ltd intervening

Before Lord Justice Nourse, Lord Justice Hope and Lord Justice Robert Walker (Speeches February 4)

The court had power to order substituted service of a writ on the Solicitors' Indemnity Fund where a defendant solicitor indemnified by the fund had defaulted, even if there was no likelihood that such service would bring the proceedings to the defendant's notice.

The Court of Appeal so held, allowing an appeal by the plaintiff, Abbey National plc, reversing the decision of Mr Justice Carnwath (The Times March 12, 1998; [1998] 2 All ER 313), and restoring that of Master Monaghan who on December 8, 1997, upheld the validity of an order by a district judge in Nottingham on June 24, 1997, granting the plaintiff leave to effect substituted service of a writ issued against the defendant, Stephen Leonard Frost, by serving it on the Solicitors' Indemnity Fund.

The defendant acted for the plaintiff building society and its borrower in relation to a loan secured on a leasehold flat in London in November 1990. The loan was for £160,000 and its avowed purpose was to assist the borrower to purchase the flat for £195,000.

The plaintiff claimed that the defendant, negligently and in breach of fiduciary duty, omitted to tell it that the purchase was a sub-purchase with the consideration of £195,000 being apportioned as to £132,000 to the vendor and £63,000 to the sub-vendor. In October 1992, the borrower having defaulted on the mortgage, the plaintiff resold the flat for only £70,000.

The defendant, a sole practitioner, had been struck off the roll of solicitors for conduct unconnected with the present case and was reported to be living in Thailand.

The Rules of the Supreme Court provide by Order 65, rule 4(1) if it appears to the court that it is impracticable for any reason to serve a document such as a writ in the manner prescribed, the court may make an order for substituted service.

"(3) Substituted service of a document ... is effected by taking such steps as the court may direct to bring the document to the notice of the person to be served."

Mr Rupert Jackson, QC and Mr Andrew Goodman for the plaintiff; Mr Richard Seymour, QC and Mr Matthew Jackson for the fund.

LORD JUSTICE NOURSE said that the court was compelled by the evidence to proceed on the footing that, if the order for substituted service were restored, there was no likelihood that the writ would reach the defendant or come to his knowledge.

On that footing, Mr Seymour submitted that under Order 64, rule 4 no order for substituted service, whether by service on the fund or otherwise, could properly be made.

He relied on *Porter v Freudenberg* ([1915] 1 KB 857, 888-890) in which the Court of Appeal held that substituted service should only be permitted where the plaintiff was unable to effect personal service and the writ was "likely to reach the defendant or to come to his knowledge if the method of substituted service which is asked for by the plaintiff is adopted."

Mr Justice Carnwath had accepted Mr Seymour's contention that that case established a general rule, which applied to the present case, that substituted service would not be ordered where the de-

fendant's whereabouts were unknown and there was no likelihood that the writ would reach him or come to his knowledge.

The judge had not been referred to the rules of court as they stood when *Porter v Freudenberg* was decided. As set out in *The Supreme Court Practice* 1914, they included a provision in Order 9, rule 2 for substituted service broadly equivalent to the present Order 65, rule 4(1), but there was no equivalent of the present rule 4(3).

However, the Rules to Order 10, the equivalent of the present Order 65, rule 4(2), providing for supporting affidavits, in the 1914 edition set out "principles usually followed as to 'substituted' or other service" which had been settled by the King's Bench masters in May 1903, and included the following: "If the writ is not likely to reach the defendant nor to come to his knowledge if service is substituted, then as a general rule substituted service should not be ordered."

In *Porter v Freudenberg*, the court gave leave to effect substituted service on two German nationals, personal service on whom was impossible in time of war, by service on their agents in this country.

The defendants had assets in this country which it would have been unjust to take in execution unless the court could be satisfied the writs were likely to reach them or come to their knowledge.

It was therefore natural for the court to express itself as it did in that case in the form of a general rule. But general expressions of opinion, however eminent their source, must always be read in the light of the particular facts which occasioned them.

Despite its acceptance of the principles adopted by the King's Bench masters, the views expressed by the Court of Appeal in *Porter v Freudenberg* could not be treated as having narrowed the discretion under what was now Order 65, rule 4(1) in relation to other facts, in particular where there was reason to suppose that the defendant had chosen to disappear and would be most unlikely, if served, to contest the claim or assist the fund in doing so.

The current wording of Order 65, rule 4(3) was introduced in 1962. Its effect, broadly stated, was to elevate the principle of discretion adopted by the King's Bench masters into the rule itself.

On that footing, his Lordship was unable to agree with the judge that it carried an implied requirement that the order would be likely to bring the document to the notice of the person to be served.

Rule 4(3) could not detract from the discretion of the court under rule 4(1). It was intended to provide for what would no doubt constitute the vast majority of orders for substituted service. Its effect could perhaps best be understood by reading in the words "if any" between "taking such steps" and "as the court may direct".

In the present case, the fact that the defendant solicitor's whereabouts were unknown and there was no likelihood that the writ would reach him or come to his knowledge, was no bar to an order for substituted service on the fund if it would otherwise be proper to make such an order.

Having regard to the purposes for which the fund was set up and the public nature of its obligations in relation to defaulting solicitors, his Lordship agreed with the master that it was proper in the present case.

Lord Justice Henry and Lord Justice Robert Walker agreed.

Solicitors: Curtis & Parkinson, Nottingham; Wansbroughs Willey Hargrave.

Plea-bargaining bid deplored

Regina v Dossetter

Plea-bargaining to extract from a judge an exact sentence formed no part of English jurisprudence.

Lord Justice Rose so stated on January 29 when, sitting in the Court of Appeal, Criminal Division, with Mr Justice Hooper, the court dismissed the appeal of Anthony William James Dossetter against a seven year sentence of imprisonment imposed at Chester Crown Court by Judge Dutton on July 16, 1998 on conviction of conspiracy to produce counterfeit money.

It was also stated by Lord Lane, Lord Chief Justice, in *R v Warr* ([1991] 12 Cr App R (S) 680) that there should be no visits to a judge except in most exceptional circumstances and there was a need for record in chambers.

HIS LORDSHIP said that on June 1 and 2, 1998 there had been six visits by Dossetter's counsel to

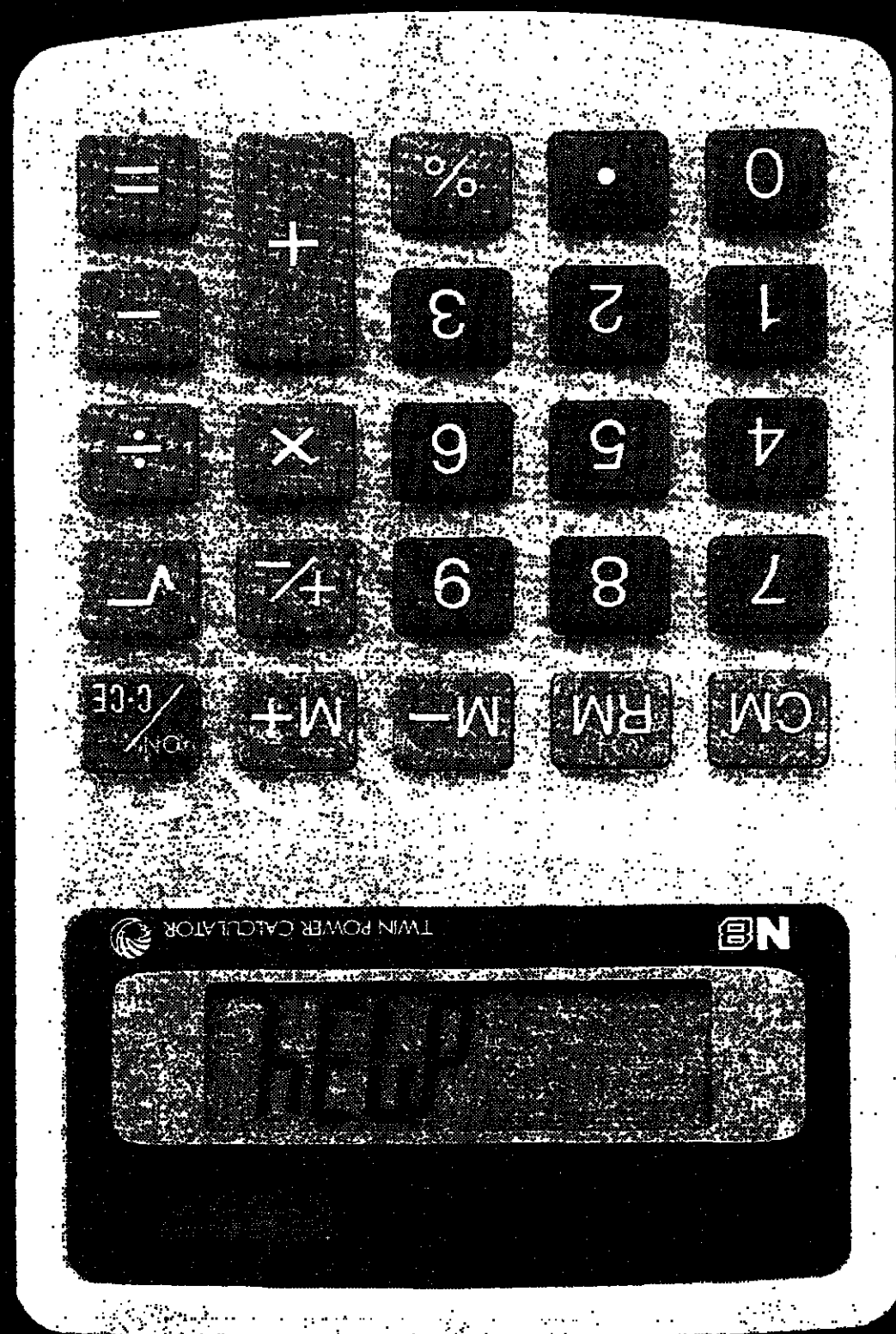
the judge's private chambers. That was a blatant attempt by counsel to engage in plea-bargaining with the judge before Dossetter decided to plead guilty.

Fortunately, the visits were tape-recorded. In *R v Turner* ([1970] 54 Cr App R 352) Lord Parker of Waddington, Lord Chief Justice, set out principles which had to be applied to private discussions between judge and counsel that had since been repeated in the courts.

It was also stated by Lord Lane, Lord Chief Justice, in *R v Warr* ([1991] 12 Cr App R (S) 680) that there should be no visits to a judge except in most exceptional circumstances and there was a need for record in chambers.

30p

THE TIMES



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THE TIMES
EDUCATION

Lifting morale with pay

The inevitable hullabaloo over performance-related pay hijacked the debate over this week's proposals for attracting more and better graduates into the teaching profession. There was more to the Government's proposals, and there needed to be.

Rewarding high performance should help to prevent good teachers from leaving the profession, as they have been doing in ever-increasing numbers. But the promise of incentives several years into a career is not going to sway many of the thousands of graduates who turn their backs on teaching each year. Starting salaries have never compared badly with those of other graduate occupations.

David Blunkett, the Education Secretary, should be wary of placing all his eggs in the performance-related basket in any case, because the system is far from certain to work effectively.

Government spokesmen were talking tough this week, insisting that change would come no matter what the opposition. But that is a different matter from making it act as the magnet the Government wants.

The unions were always going to resist anything that could be portrayed as a throwback to Victorian payment by re-

sults. Yet how could this fail to be part of a merit-based system? Pupil achievement, after all, is what schools are all about. The sticking point, as usual, is how it should be measured.

The National Union of Teachers will oppose the concept, no matter what, and has already threatened industrial action. The union is demanding that all senior teachers cross the proposed pay threshold — a stance that says everything about its willingness to contemplate a new approach. The National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT) has also come out against the scheme since it discovered the scale of the Government's demands. Even the Professional Association of Teachers, the most conservative of the unions, was critical this week.

Nigel de Gruchy, NASUWT's general secretary, predicted a "grassroots rebellion" when teachers saw that they would be required to sign new contracts and play a fuller role in the school to qualify

for higher pay rates. "There might be jam tomorrow," he said, "but it's jam tomorrow if you're prepared to do extra work tomorrow."

Ministers probably expected trouble from the classroom unions, but it will be the attitude of head teachers which determines whether performance-related pay works as intended. The proposals give heads a lot of flexibility in judging their staff, and some will be reluctant to use it. The collegiate ideal runs deep in education, and it will take time for some head teachers to accept a system which they fear will divide the staff-room.

Others will balk at the complexity of the system and its demands on the time

of school managers, who will be required to agree individual targets and monitor their implementation, as well as taking responsibility for the outcome.

Peter Smith, the general secretary of the Association of Teachers and Lecturers, says: "I've never read anything so bureaucratic and bewildering in my life."

Estelle Morris, the School Standards Minister, did her best to sell the package to teachers at the latest of the Government's consultation meetings in Birmingham this week.

"We will raise the standing of the profession," she said. "We will reward good teachers so that they don't get stuck on relatively low levels of pay, improve the quality of training and remove teachers

that are not up to the standards required."

Here lies the real challenge for recruitment to the profession, rather than retention. Everyone agrees that this is about more than just money, but governments alone cannot alter the "standing of the profession" and the official messages are still mixed.

Take Ms Morris's statement. Performance-related pay should be good news for a profession whose morale could do with a lift. The majority should benefit eventually and ministers have guaranteed that there will be no limit on numbers. Likewise, the promised improvements to training, which Mr Blunkett now plans to oversee personally.

Yet even at a meeting intended to win over teachers comes the apparently obligatory focus on under-performance. After almost two years in which Labour ministers have made it crystal clear that they will be less tolerant of failure than their predecessors, the carrot still cannot ap-

pear without a big stick in the back-ground.

Undoubtedly, there remains an urgent need for improvement in many schools, but it would be more likely to come about with a better balance between the Government's promised combination of "pressure and support".

Even the Teacher Training Agency, whose own performance is to be scrutinised by Mr Blunkett, has expressed concern at the effect on recruitment of constant criticism of state schools. Professor Clive Booth, the TTA's chairman, told the Girls' Schools Association before Christmas that he was confident his message had been heard and that ministers would adopt a more positive tone. Let us hope that he is right.

Even yesterday, at the publication of a survey on instrumental music tuition, Dr Janet Rinterman, the Principal of the Royal College of Music, identified plummeting self-esteem as the most serious cause of growing teacher shortages.

If you tell a profession often enough that it is full of dead wood, and its own representatives constantly emphasise the negative aspects of the job, it is not surprising if young people choose to look elsewhere for a career.



John O'Leary

Pushing back boundaries for school governors

Guidelines are needed to ensure that governors understand their position. David Tyler reports

School governors have been put into the front line of the Government's drive to raise standards in state schools. They already have overall responsibility for the curriculum and this week they were told that they would become the final arbiters of performance-related pay.

There has always been a grey area between the governing body and the head teacher. Governors have the legal responsibility for ensuring good quality education and the head and staff are obliged to report to them on how well the school is doing. But governors cannot be responsible for the day-to-day running of the school, even though they are expected to monitor standards and approve strategies. How are they expected to achieve this?

The latest form of Ofsted inspection reports gives some guidance. For example, the head teacher, staff and governors might be told to raise standards by ensuring that the programmes for study in the national curriculum are fully taught, and by continuing to

monitor the teachers' progress.

Once a plan for improvement is approved, the governors are responsible for seeing that it is carried out.

Mavis Grant, of Newcastle's Mary Trevelyan Primary School, named by Ofsted as one of England's most-improved schools, says: "Governors can help in lots of ways. They should sit down with the head and the senior staff, and work out the best way to do it."

As the head of a school which has piloted the literacy hour, Ms Grant has more than two years' experience of the most delicate issue of the moment for primary schools. She says: "One governor took special responsibility for literacy. He came into class, talked to teachers and pupils, and had discussions with me before giving his own report to the governing body. It is helpful for governors to get a different perspective on the school."

Even governors who cannot find time to visit classrooms can help to raise standards through strategic planning, Ms Grant believes.

David Hart, general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, is more doubtful about how much governors can do to raise standards. "I think it would be very difficult to get them involved, other than in setting targets and then reviewing progress with the head."

The Government's proposals are asking them to do a lot: the appraisal of heads, receiving recommendations about pay levels, and being involved in the annual review of progress made by the school. It would be difficult for them to become involved in a way which does not interfere with the management of the head. I hope that when the Government's proposals are finalised, they will try to draw a distinction between governance and management, which until now has too often been blurred."

Some of his concerns are shared by Pete Bishop, head teacher of Vyner Primary School, in Birkenhead, who says: "Governors cannot do very much without training. At the moment they have to be guided by somebody who understands the process, and in most cases that is the head."



School governors Richard Whiteley, Cheryl Abbott and David Tyler

He is also concerned that governors with jobs may not have enough time to devote to the school. "I fail to see how they can do all that is necessary to monitor standards on a sound basis," he adds. "They could base their views of a school's performance on the end-of-year tests. That may be simple but it is also simplistic. In a primary school, you have to go back over the years on reading tests, spelling tests, baseline assessment and so on, and know about the children and their backgrounds."

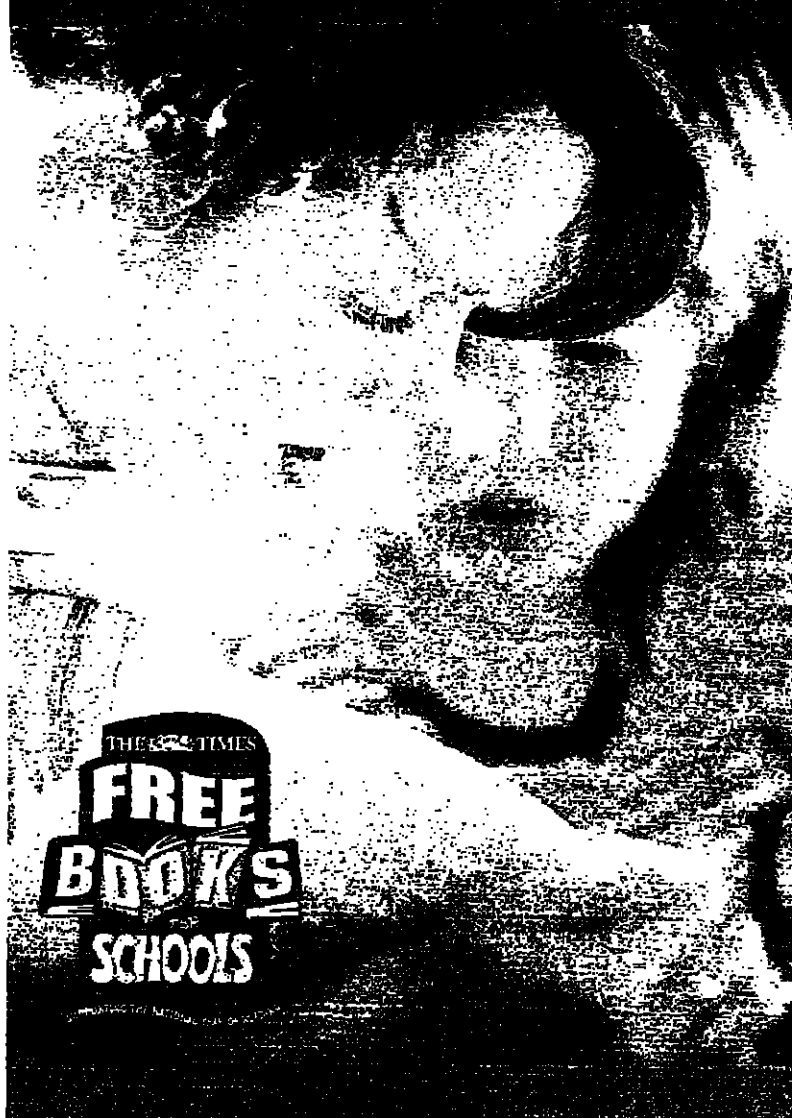
Mr Bishop sees trouble if guidelines are not laid down. Governors, he fears, "might want to extend their powers beyond what is reasonable; for example, going into classes and acting like inspectors."

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CHANGING TIMES

How to beat exam stress

Easter revision courses must sound to many pupils like a cruel way to spend precious holiday time, but more and more students are finding them a vital addition to their term's work.

"I've learnt more in the past few days than all year," were the flattering words from one student in her end-of-course evaluation. This, of course, cannot be entirely true: you can't cover in five days what you would normally study over five terms. The important thing is that the student believed she had made a breakthrough. Her confidence level had soared, based on actual grades for practice essays and she had learnt more about exam technique than at school.

However, some teachers are sniffy about their students going on revision courses, perhaps seeing such participation as a reflection of their own inadequacy. Occasionally, they would be right. According to Norman Dovey, who has run economics revision at Wellington College in Crowthorne, near Bracknell, for several years, some students do turn up under-prepared for the forthcoming A levels.

Illness, big classes, change of school and change of teacher are bad luck: not covering the required syllabus by Easter is either risky brinkmanship or bad planning. Many students who enrol at Wellington, and other courses, are "borderline" candidates. Their first-choice university, for example, wants a "C" grade, but a "D" is being predicted. Bumping up students by one critical grade is a usual target.

However, you don't have to be behind or between grades to consider an Easter revision course. As one student said to me: "I've had really good teachers. It worried me, though, that during the Easter holiday and study leave, I'd be getting no tuition." He has a point. At a critical time, students can sud-

denly find themselves cut off from a life of teacher help and feedback. Many cannot work well alone or concentrate in a home environment. A one-week, one-subject revision course cannot help but focus the mind. Nigel Stout, managing director of Mander Portman Woodward (MPW) tutorial colleges, says that occasionally students are booked in, usually by anxious parents, for three weeks. These are not called intensive courses for nothing: though the length of study is feasible, the demands on stamina and motivation are probably excessive.



Even a week is hard graft. I know because I spent a day sitting in on lessons

in MPW London. "Gruelling" and "mind-blowing" were some of the terms used by my fellow students as we relaxed after a four-hour session. They were also unanimous that the system was effective.

At MPW, Easter numbers rose from 518 in 1996 to 918 last year. Mr Stout attributes this to recommendations and the fact that MPW courses are geared not merely to individual subjects but also to modules within subjects, and to specific syllabuses and examination boards.

I joined Richard Martin's English class, where the pace was brisk, the focus clear and all the students were challenged. We worked on King Lear, from the point of view of discussing how we would use our knowledge to good effect in an exam. Steve Boyes, one of the course directors, confirmed that although notes are taken, the emphasis is on understanding, study skills and the development of appropriate question-answering techniques.

Extra schooling is not a cheap option: a 40-hour week costs £525 for one subject every day and an hour of invigilated examination practice.

At Wellington there is the chance to live in, an option taken up by 60 per cent of students. Nick Jones, the course director, believes that £485 for a fully residential week with 30 hours of contact teaching represents good value for money.

For students who have never boarded, it is a useful preparation for university; and from the evaluation sheets filled in by students at the end of the course, it is clear that Wellington's sports facilities — squash, badminton, swimming, soccer and weights — are well used in the afternoon break. After 9 o'clock, while tutors are marking practice papers, the day's progress can be discussed over drinks.

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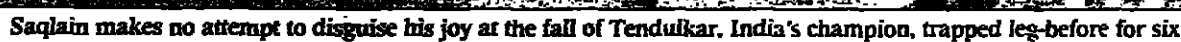
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FROM RICHARD HOBSON IN DELHI

"Never have so many people been so worried about the health of Sachin Tendulkar," *The Times of India* said. He did, indeed, declare himself fit, but scored only six runs before falling to Saqlain Mushtaq for the third innings in suc-



sweetly. His attempt to pull Saglain from outside off stump, soon after completing a maiden Test half-century, represented a rare misjudgment. Tendulkar fell in

INDIA: First Innings	
S Parnesh b Saqlan	60
V V S Laxman b Wasim	35
R Dravid lbw b Saqlan	33
S R Tendulkar lbw b Saqlan	6
*M Azharuddin c Ijaz b Mushtaq Ahmed	67
S C Ganguly lbw b Mushtaq Ahmed	13
IN R Mongia not out	9
A Kumble c Yusuf b Saqlan	0
J Smith lbw b Saqlan	0
Extras (b 11, lb 7, nb 6)	24
Total (8 wickets)	247

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-52, 2-113, 3-122, 4-191, 5-231, 6-240, 7-243, 8-247

BOWLING: Wasim Akram 10-5-25-1, Waqar Younis 13-5-37-0, Mushtaq Ahmed 36-5-64-2, Saqlain Mushtaq 34-5-8-9-5, Shafiq Arif 41-14-0-0

PAKISTAN: Saqlain Mushtaq, Shafiq Arif, Ijaz Ahmed, Inzamam-ul-Haq, Younis Yousof, Yousaf, Saleem Malik, Waqar Younis, Wasim Akram, Waqar Younis, Saqlain Mushtaq, Mushtaq Ahmed

Umpires: S.A. Bucknor (West Indies),

Saqain's next over, deceived by the flight of a full-length ball that he had attempted to paddle towards fine leg.

Azharuddin provided a few wristy strokes to complement the defence of David during a fourth-wicket partnership of 69 before David received one of the few deliveries from Saqain that did turn appreciably. Wasim Akram declined to take the new ball and was rewarded when Ganguly fell trying to force Mush-taq to edge and Azharuddin, on 67, legged to slip. When Saqain added the wickets of Kumble and Srinath, Pakistan could feel content with their day's work.

FROM MICHAEL HENDERSON IN SYDNEY

This is the time of year when England players start thinking of green fields, wet afternoons and pints with foaming heads. They have played a Test series, carried their bodies through ten one-day games of no real importance and must now play at least three more when some of them — Gough and Stewart, for instance — are so exhausted that they hardly know where they are.

There were too much cricket. The 100 men had cricket, and the 100 men to suffer are the cricketers, who will be burnt out before their time. Unless, of course, they are called Wells and Alleyne, in which case they might think the development of the one-day game is a jolly good thing because it gives them a chance to say they "played for England".

Alleyne took three wickets in the bash the other night and Wells made a few runs, going in first. It will probably be the nearest that they get to representing England in the World Cup. It was not necessarily a mistake to bring them here — a team needs its supporting cast and they are good players — but if you see Wells striding over to bat in a faded powder-blue shirt and Alleyne trundling in to fill a few overs in mid-innings, it may be time to head for the hills.

Still, there are games left to win and England want to win them. Fairbrother is an injury doubt, hampered by a dodgy hamstring, and, as Mullally sat it out on Wednesday, it may be time to give Gough a rest this time. Australia intend to give McGrath a break, to keep him fresh, or fresher, for the best-of-three shoot-out.

The ground will be packed to the rafters for this game. Great will be the cheering. As Dame Nellie Melba used to say: "Give 'em muck."

LINKS

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FROM JOHN STERN IN NEW PLYMOUTH

DESPITE another patchy batting display, England Under-19 compiled more than enough runs to ensure at least a draw in the first "Test" of the series against New Zealand. The beacon in the England second-innings total of 200

He looked firmly on course for a century until being run-out — when he slipped trying to make his ground at the non-striker's end after a cover drive by Michael Carberry.

Matt Bulbeck, a tall left-hander, whose forte is left-arm swing bowling, made 51 to bolster the England lead after a middle-order collapse. He and Mark Wallace added 48 for the final wicket. The New Zealand opening batsmen then survived the final ten overs before the close.

□ If the pattern continues in Harare, England might not

finish off Zimbabwe A's first innings by the end of their five-day match (Thrasy Petropoulos writes). The rains returned yesterday, allowing only 19.3 overs of play on the third day, a marginal improvement on the 9.5 overs of day two but not quite the 23 overs of the first day. Zimbabwe A had reached 147 for seven by the premature close.

Scoreboards, page 49

THE 20-year career of Kim Barnett with Derbyshire is over after the county and player parted company by mutual agreement.

That issue has still to be resolved and an extraordinary general meeting will be held in March.

officials have demanded an inquiry into their team's crushing Test and one-day defeats in South Africa. Clive Lloyd, the team manager, Malcolm Marshall, the coach, and Brian Lara, the captain, have been summoned to a meeting in Antigua next week.

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RACING

Littmoden finds sand provides firm foundation

By CHRIS McGRATH

THE man who built his house on sand has traditionally been prey to ridicule, but there is nothing remotely foolhardy in the way Nick Littmoden is laying down the foundations for his training career.

To jumping enthusiasts, flat racing on the sand at Lingfield, Southwell and Wolverhampton is a numbing palliative to bad weather, but to Littmoden it has become the bedrock of ambitious plans for expansion. Not only is he the leading trainer on the 20 winners this winter, with 20 winners, he has, so far, been based at the trackside barns at Wolverhampton. Now he is transferring the bulk of his 65 horses to the Newmarket stables vacated by the retirement of Julie Cecil.

At 36, he is raising the stakes with considerable bravura. "The move is about getting quality horses and owners," he said at Lingfield yesterday.

"In two years' time, I want to be pushing for major honours. I love all-weather racing, but don't want to get stuck in everyone's mind as the all-weather trainer. I started with three horses but always set out to achieve something. I want to win classics. I want to win championships. It's been a struggle, but maybe there's light at the end of the tunnel now."

If a mighty oak is indeed growing here, Littmoden will be forever indebted to one of those three little acorns. Crean Gift cost just 1,350 guineas



Littmoden: testing time

out of John Dunlop's yard and promptly split a pastern, but 18 months ago he hit the bull's-eye as Littmoden's first runner in a pattern race, winning a group three sprint at Leopardstown.

With that old eccentric, Tertium, winning Kempton's Jubilee Handicap last season and the likes of Baron De Pichon this winter, Littmoden has consolidated a reputation for finding the right niche for his horses. To him, getting the most out of a horse is a double challenge: it must be equal to each opportunity in terms of both ability and physical condition.

"I firmly believe there's a result in almost every horse," he said. "I'm quick to offer an opinion if I think a horse is without ability. I'd rather have found something better, but failing that I'd rather have an empty box. Once I find the right grade, though, it will stay with me for a long time. I'm a great believer in the im-

portance of feed, and I do a lot of groundwork, take a long time getting them fit initially. Once they're there, they'll keep going."

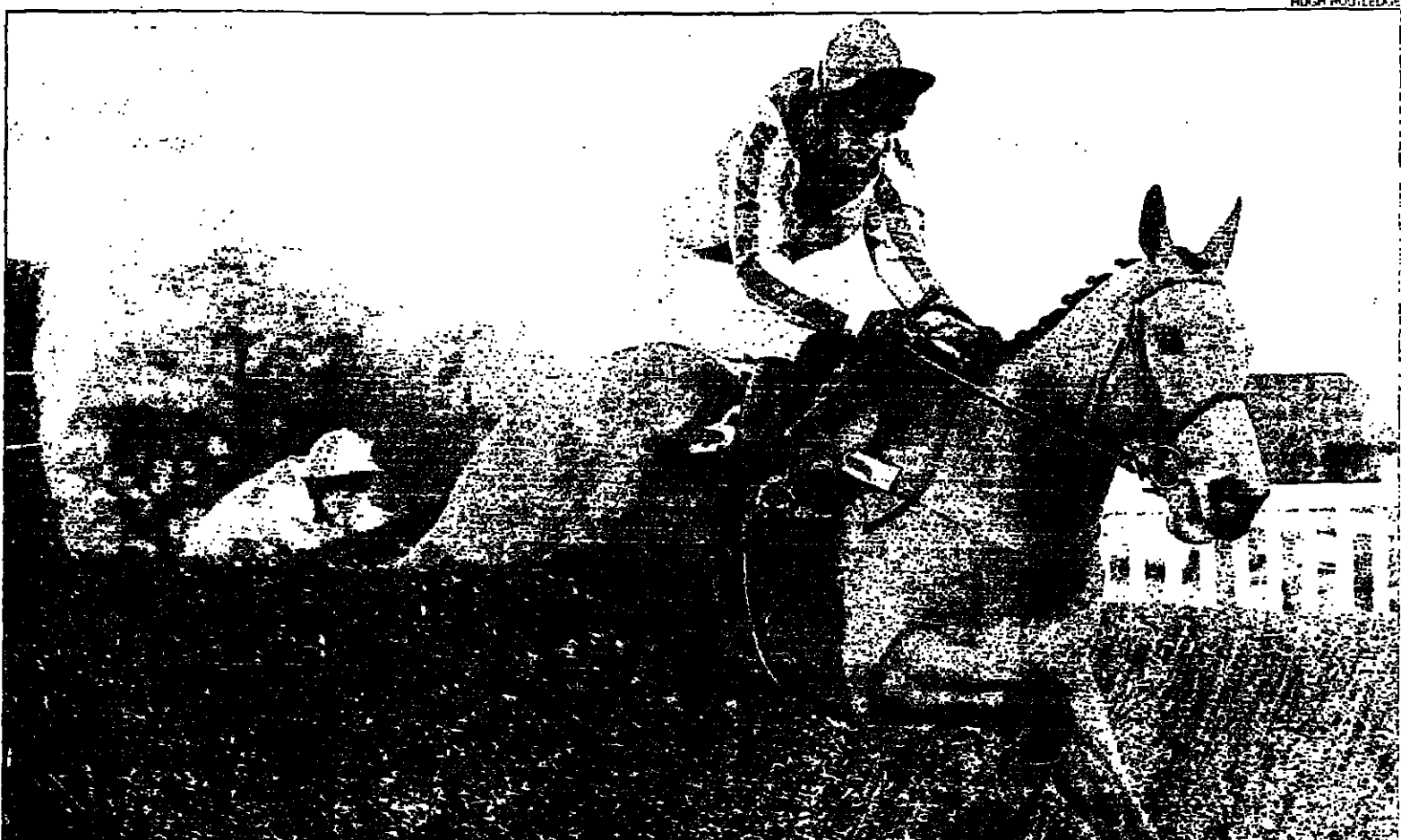
Similar durability is required of the trainer, a man sustained by abundant personal energies and self-belief. He feels a genuine sense of vocation, despite rather stumbling into the sport.

His grandmother sowed an early interest by taking him to Brighton races as a child, but it was only a chance meeting with Mick Masson, who trained at his native Lewes, that released a yawning bank clerk from his torments. "I'm quite an active person and was bored senseless," he said. "But I fell in love with the idea of training as soon as I started with Mick."

Having followed his own path with such assurance, principally through interval training and careful feeding, he is unlikely to lose his sense of direction in the open spaces of Newmarket Heath.

Nonetheless, he acknowledges a certain culture shock to be inevitable. "I've got my own ideas and I've already been scouting round the gallops for the right places to do things the way I have always done them. It's a major step, but I wouldn't want to look back in five years' time regretting I hadn't done it."

He concluded: "I'm expecting a real struggle this year, especially in this spring. But I believe in setting goals and I want to win 50 winners this year. I'd like to think I can compete in every grade."



Ramallah, ridden by Culloty, jumps clear of his rivals on his way to victory in the Tote Chase (Showcase Handicap) at Towcester yesterday

Ramallah recaptures winning form

By OUR RACING STAFF

HENRIETTA KNIGHT refused to take the credit for the turnaround in Ramallah's fortunes at Towcester yesterday. After three runs this year, reading "PPE", the ten-year-old gave his connections little cause for optimism going into the £10,000-added Tote Chase (Showcase Handicap).

But he improved on those performances to gain his fourth course and distance success at the expense of the 13-8 favourite, Rightsaid.

Having jumped to the front at the third last, the 7-1 winner clouded the penultimate obstacle and, although Rightsaid

fred and Graham Bradley closed the gap after the last, there was still two lengths between the pair at the line, with a distance back to Wandering Light.

As Jim Culloty dismounted, the trainer handed the credit for the win to the bay's breeder and part-owner, Marie Steele. "Full marks to the owner for this," she said. "She chose the race, she walked the course and she wanted to run. I had my doubts because I thought it could be too sticky for him. I take no credit for this."

But he does love Towcester and the horses are just returning to form. They weren't

RICHARD EVANS

nap Count Karmeski (4.00 Catterick) Adrian Maguire has a good record for the Tote Chase (Showcase Handicap) and his recent course winner should appreciate today's longer trip.

Next best bet is (2.00 Catterick) right about two months ago, but I feel they are back to themselves now.

Wandering Light's trainer, Henry Daly, saddled Cheer-

ful Aspect to win the Corporate Bonding At The Races Novices' Chase. When the son of top sprinter Cadeaux Genereux was foaled at the Gainsborough Stud six years ago, it is unlikely his owners were thinking of this sort of race, as Daly observed.

After Cheerful Aspect had justified 6-4 favouritism by 13 lengths from Spring Double, the trainer said: "He is bred to get all six furlongs. I don't think two miles and six in sticky ground at Towcester was what they had in mind."

Steve Gollings, Get The Points' trainer, suggested that his five-year-old was "bred to win a Derby". He didn't man-

age to trouble Benny The Dip at Epsom, but he proved more than a match for Colonel Hook in the Broadway Stampings Novices' Hurdle, in the process turning round Huntingdon running with the third-placed odds-on favourite, Radmsko.

It was a similar story for Ismeno. Sired by Ela-Mana-Mou out of a Seattle Slew mare, he came into the world in the care of Sheikh Mohammed's lavish breeding set-up. The top-weight lived up to his fine pedigree by comfortably beating Province in the Leys Board Handicap Hurdle on his first outing for David Elsworth.

CATERICK

2.00 Splendid Melody 3.30 Springfield Scally
2.30 Wymber Flyer 4.00 Minster Glory
3.00 Tumble 4.30 Orleans

Timekeeper's top rating: 2.00 SPLITTING MELODY.

GOING: GOOD (GOOD TO FIRM IN PLACES) TOTE JACKPOT MEETING: SIS

2.00 EBF NH NOVICES HURDLE (QUALIFIER)

(£2,980; 2m 3f 110yds) (10 runners)

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FOOTBALL: £3.5 MILLION CROATIA INTERNATIONAL CAN MAKE IT FOURTH TIME LUCKY FOR NEWCASTLE IN TRANSFER MARKET

Gullit swoops for magpie lover Maric

FOR a man who once described himself as a "citizen of the world," Ruud Gullit was putting his theory into practice last night, flying from Eastern Europe to Spain to complete the estimated £3.5 million signing of Silvio Maric, the Croatia signing of the day.

Gullit, the Newcastle United manager, and Freddy Shepherd, the club chairman, emerged from negotiations with Zagreb officials yesterday having agreed a fee for the Croatia international. They were understood to have travelled on to La Manga last night, where Zagreb's first-team squad are on a winter break.

"I'm happy about this," Maric, 23, who played a bit-part role in his country's run to third place in the

World Cup last summer, said. "I must talk with Ruud Gullit and Newcastle about my personal contract, but the important thing is that Newcastle and Croatia Zagreb have made a deal." While the player's father said that his son would not arrive on Tyneside until after the Croatia international match with Denmark next Wednesday, Newcastle officials were hoping to persuade Maric to pay a fleeting visit to Newcastle within the next 24 hours.

Their desire is to avoid a repeat of recent mishaps in the transfer market. Taribo West and Dion Dublin have both rejected moves to Newcastle, while Ibrahim Ba, the Internazionale and France midfielder, failed a medical last month. There is

little doubt, however, that Maric is keen to sign for Gullit. He played at St James' Park during Newcastle's 4-3 aggregate victory over Zagreb in the second qualifying round of the European Cup last season and, on hearing of Newcastle's interest last week, wore a black and white shirt in training. "My favourite bird is the magpie," he said.

Blackburn Rovers believe that they did everything to persuade Tim Sherwood to stay, but that was not the version of the transfer saga emanating from the midfielder player yesterday after he had completed his move to Tottenham Hotspur.

Sherwood, who had been unhappy with life at Blackburn for the past few months, underwent extensive contract negotiations with the club with a view to securing a lucrative extension. It was understood that he rejected the improved offers, but he has since accused Blackburn of forcing him out. "They accepted the bid from Spurs last Monday, a day before I was due to have more talks about a new contract with the club," Sherwood said. "When you realise your club has accepted an offer from another club, you've got no option but to leave. Once I knew about Tottenham's offer for me, there was no doubt I would sign for them."

The fee is believed to be around

£4 million and Sherwood has signed a contract that will keep him at White Hart Lane for the next four years. Sherwood, 30, was at Blackburn for seven years and was an integral part of the side, managed by Kenny Dalglish, that won the FA Carling Premiership title in 1995.

Born in St Albans, Sherwood still owns a house in the South East, but he said: "It's Tottenham that appeals to me, not the fact that I live in the area. It was difficult to leave Blackburn, but everyone's time comes to an end. When Brian Kidd came in as manager, he perhaps decided that it was right for me to go."

George Graham, the Tottenham manager, said: "Tim is a quality player who can help our midfield

compete with the best teams in the league." Stan Collymore, the Aston Villa forward, is expected to leave the club today where he has been receiving treatment for stress for the past week and could be available for Villa's home league game against Blackburn tomorrow. Liverpool are not expected to follow-up their interest in David Weir, the Heart of Midlothian centre back.

Bolton Wanderers have agreed to sell Arnar Gunnlaugsson, their transfer-listed Icelandic striker, to Leicester City for £2 million.

Gunnlaugsson, 25, who signed for Bolton from IA Akranes in July 1997 for £100,000, will talk over personal terms at Albert Street today.

RUGBY LEAGUE

Low-key start for league with high ideas

By Christopher Irvine

MODESTY no longer becomes sport. The first division is now the Premiership — officially, the Northern Ford Premiership. At the present rate of progress, the Super League will become the Hyper League, and so on.

The self-styled Premiership, not to be confused with the FA Carling Premiership, Allied Dunbar Premiership or the top-eight competition discarded by rugby league itself two years ago, is viewed by those clubs outside the elite as necessary window-dressing.

The erstwhile first and second division clubs begin their season in a single 18-team competition on Sunday, four weeks before the Super League starts, still without television coverage, but, importantly, with a modest but valuable £100,000 sponsorship by northern Ford dealers.

Bob McDermott, the chairman of the itself outdated First Division Clubs Association, said: "Super League is seen as the premier competition, but there are hundreds of other people playing at amateur and professional level and we are the best of the rest."

Research will concentrate on whether the Premiership should revert to a winter season. Should that prove attractive to television, McDermott said it would be an incentive to switch back. A frittering away of £10.8 million, which represents two seasons' money after the smaller clubs were bought out of the Super League contract last year, would place the futures of several at risk.

With the arrival of sponsors, the successful introduction of top-five play-offs last year and a keener sense of open competition this season, the mood is upbeat. Hull Kingston Rovers start as favourites, but Dewsbury, Hunslet and Widnes are all dark horses.

SQUASH

Parke resists challenge from old foe

SIMON PARKE, the defending champion, left the Northern Club in Didsbury yesterday sure of his quarter-final place in the Business Pages national championships at the Manchester Velodrome today (Colin McQuillan writes). Half an hour earlier, the Nottingham-based 26-year-old had stood two games down to David Campion, the unranked coach from Queens Sports Club in Halifax.

Parke won 7-15, 9-15, 15-6, 15-4, 15-5 in 65 minutes to reach a quarter-final against yet Marcus Berrutt, 23, another Yorkshireman, whom he defeated in straight games at the same stage last year but who has improved enough to put out Nick Taylor, the No 4 seed, 13-15, 9-15, 15-9, 15-3, 15-5 yesterday.

Parke and Campion shared sparkling junior careers. While Parke went on to become a touring professional, Campion broke down with groin problems that still inhibit his action.

In June, Campion will marry Cassandra Jackson, the top seed in the women's championship who eased through the first round yesterday 3-0, 6-0, 9-6, 9-0 against Janie Thacker.

There can no longer be any doubts as to Dwight Yorke's value, says Kevin McCarra

NO rest for the good. There are occasions when others are allowed to drop their chins on their chests while they lool on the substitutes' bench, but Manchester United will not permit Dwight Yorke to take his ease there. Then again, the forward never allows the opposition any respite either. When fit, he has been deemed indispensable and chosen to start every FA Carling Premiership match since signing for the club from Aston Villa last August.

He is the still point in a rotating selection policy. Expect defenders to grimace in disagreement with the idea that Yorke is static in any other regard. His roaming is always designed to take him, by devious routes, to the same destination. The Tobagan has scored 13 times for United in the Premiership already, making it possible that he will become the first player at Old Trafford since Brian McClair to score 20 league goals in a season.

Yorke has begun to strike with the authority of a man declaring his value to the world. Sleekness of control and a low finish, for his seventh goal in five appearances, ensured that United defeated Derby County 1-0 on Wednesday, when Andy Cole, his customary ally, was not taking part.

Yorke is particularly formidable because of a new, assured versatility. How are centre backs to deal with a person who gives them the slip by stepping out of character? Last Sunday, Yorke, who is all finesse, converted himself into an aggressive target man

THE BEST SINCE BEST?

1987-88	Brian McClair	24
1988-89	Mark Hughes	14
1989-90	Hughes	13
1990-91	McClair, Steve Bruce	13
1991-92	McClair	18
1992-93	Hughes	15
1993-94	Eric Cantona	18
1994-95	Andrei Kanchelskis	14
1995-96	Cantona	14
1996-97	Ole Gunnar Solskjær	18
1997-98	Andy Cole	16
1998-99	Dwight Yorke	13 so far

Before McClair, left, scored 24 goals in 87-88, the previous United player to break the 20 league goals barrier was George Best, right, with 26 in 1967-68

when he climbed to tuck home the header in the last minute that defeated Charlton Athletic. Opponents are failing to take his measure and he is also proving more than the United supporters bargained for. Many believed the price excessive when Alex Ferguson agreed a £12.5 million

fee with Aston Villa. The scale of the cost was the measure of the manager's faith. Ferguson has a very Scottish sense that there is self-delusion at the heart of extravagance and, when signings were balanced against sales, it emerges that he spent only £1 million a season in his first 11 years at Old

Trafford. Last spring, according to Martin Edwards, the club chairman, it was Ferguson's decision not to buy Marcelo Salas, the Chile forward who eventually moved to Lazio for £13.5 million.

When the deal for Yorke became possible, there were, by contrast, no inhibitions. In addition to identifying the right

man, Ferguson had also picked the right moment to acquire him. When Eric Cantona arrived at Old Trafford, he gave the place a haughty look, as if determining whether it was worthy of him. Yorke is too merry for disdainful aloofness, but he, too, regards the

arena with approval rather than trepidation. It is his proper stage. He was not always so esteemed. "If Yorke is a first division footballer, my name is Mao Tse Tung," Tommy Docherty once said. Presumably, the former United manager, when he eventually passes on,

'He is proving more than the United supporters bargained for'

will now lie in state in Tiananmen Square. Ridicule is tempting, yet Docherty was giving only a gaudy version of a judgment made by several others. Yorke was a prodigy whose gifts were muffled for too long.

He was an extraordinary teenager when he amazed Graham Taylor during an exhibition match on a Villa close season tour to the Caribbean. In common with most holiday souvenirs, he did not look quite so good when brought back to drizzly Britain. When Ron Atkinson was in charge, Dalian Atkinson and Dean Saunders were the preferred partnership in attack.

His background — and the evidence of one tabloid report this season makes it tempting to portray Yorke in stereotype as a calypso hedonist — but his confidence needed to be nurtured and it was under Brian Little that Yorke finally excelled at Villa Park. Now, his mobility, touch and poise are brought to bear unwaveringly. When Ryan Giggs suffered the hamstring injury against Derby that may keep him out of the European Cup quarter-final with Internazionale next month, there was relief that the most devastating figure of all is in husky health.

The Italian club's totem expects that his poor, maltreated knees will have healed by the time of that fixture, leaving him in prime condition to be, as he put it, "the real Ronaldo, the one everyone knows". Even so, the Brazilian may find himself outdone by the revelatory Yorke.



Wise sent off four times already this season

Wise sees stock fall after going into red again

George Caulkin on the Chelsea captain's latest act of indiscipline

AFTER the fouls, the trips, the swipes and the back-chat, the fourth dismissal of Dennis Wise's season came after a relatively trivial offence, but it highlighted signs that the belligerent midfielder player's antics are beginning to try the patience of his Chelsea teammates.

Wise was guilty of twice handling the ball during his side's 4-2 defeat of Oxford United in their FA Cup fourth-round replay at Stamford Bridge on

Wednesday night. One more dismissal and Wise will equal the five red cards shown in a season to Dave Caldwell, while he was playing for Chesterfield and Torquay United 11 years ago.

His latest misdemeanour will lift his leave of absence from the Chelsea team since last August to 14 matches — a statistic not appreciated by his colleagues. "I could not believe he did it," Dan Petrescu, the Romania international, said of Wise's second handling. "Even if it was going in, it didn't really matter. We were 4-1 up with 15 minutes to go. All the lads were disappointed, even though we had won the game."

The Chelsea captain will

now miss important fixtures against Nottingham Forest, Liverpool, Middlesbrough and West Ham United, which, given the long-term injuries suffered by Pierluigi Casiraghi and Gustavo Poyet, the departure of Brian Laudrup and Tore Andre Flo's unavailability at present, can only further disrupt the club's challenge for the FA Carling Premiership.

The question, therefore, is why? Why do Chelsea persist with a player whose undoubted enthusiasm is periodically

transformed into aggression, whose gifts are often overshadowed by his attitude? Is this the insignia of a talent on the wane, a man whose legs can no longer keep pace with his brain, whose importance to his team is far less weighty than his reputation?

The answers tend to be provided when it matters most, by commanding individual performances in the Coca-Cola and Cup Winners' Cup finals last season, and by those who matter most — by Gianluca Vialli, the Chelsea player-man-

ager, and Ruud Gullit, Vialli's predecessor.

The manner of Wise's dismissal on Wednesday almost provided grounds for celebration for Vialli, who seemed to seize upon it as conclusive evidence of the player's "improving" behaviour. "I will defend him all the time," Vialli said. "He feels very frustrated because he likes to play football and he doesn't want to be branded someone who can't play all season."

In his autobiography, Gullit said: "I was convinced there was much more to Dennis as a player than his reputation at the time would lead you to believe. He was always labelled a tearaway, someone who

kicked opponents, shouted and screamed, was generally undisciplined, something of a rogue. That was not the Dennis Wise I knew and I wanted the player to emerge and to achieve."

Vialli is sticking by his player, convinced that he is mending his ways. Of his captain's five bookings this season, the last came five weeks earlier. His previous sending-off came away to Everton at the start of December — his first match after a four-game suspension. We had thought, perhaps, that his angelic demeanour heralded a change. Like a leopard bearing stripes, the theory was wrong.

Bowyer earns new England chance

PETER TAYLOR, the England Under-21 coach, has given Lee Bowyer, the Leeds United midfielder, the chance to revive his international career after their dispute over his absence from the Toulon tournament last summer.

Taylor was upset when Bowyer chose to go on holiday rather than play in France. Bowyer has not featured in the squad this season, but now Taylor has given him a reprieve for the match against France next Tuesday after a series of impressive performances for Leeds.

"I had a few words with Lee because I wanted him to go to Toulon," Taylor said. "I was disappointed over that, but Lee is playing well enough to be given another chance."

Craig Brown, the Scotland manager, denied yesterday there was a rift between himself and Andy Gorm, the Motherwell goalkeeper, who has accepted Brown's invitation to reverse his decision to

retire from international football on the eve of France 98.

Gorm, 34, walked out of the Scotland World Cup training camp, but has impressed Brown since his comeback to club football at Fir Park last month. Brown said: "There was never any acrimony on my part because I accepted his reasons for leaving us."

Neville Southall, the former Everton goalkeeper, is likely to be a substitute for Huddersfield Town in their FA Cup fifth-round tie against Derby County on February 13. Southall, 40, who is also the goalkeeping coach at Huddersfield on a non-contract basis, has been playing for Torquay United while Ken Veecey, the first-choice goalkeeper, has been recovering from injury.

Sampdoria have brought back Luciano Spalletti as coach, just six weeks after dismissing him to make way for David Platt, the former England midfielder, who left the club on Tuesday.

Ski Club	Depth		Conditions		Weather		Last snow
	L	U	Piste	Resort	Open	(Spt)	
Andorra Soldeu	80	90	Hard	Open	Varied	Sun -1	29/1
Austria Kitzbühel	70	150	Good	Open	Heavy	Cloud 0	4/2
Chengdu	40	120	Good	Open	Heavy	Sun 0	4/2
Canada Lake Louise	133	177	Good	Open	Powder	Cloud -4	3/2
France Alps d'Huez	109	200	Good	Open	Varied	Fair 3	29/1
Avoriaz	110	130	Good	Open	Heavy	Fair 0	29/1
Pelme	110	255	Good	Open	Powder	Sun 0	29/1
La Plagne	115	180	Good	Open	Powder	Cloud -3	29/1
La Tignes	110	175	Good	Open	Varied	Fair 5	29/1
Les Arcs	120	220	Good	Open	Varied	Fine 2	30/1
Megève	120	200	Good	Open	Heavy	Sun 0	29/1
Maribel	70	110	Good	Open	Varied	Fine -2	29/1
Tignes	117	220	Good	Open	Varied	Fine -3	29/1
Val d'Isère	105	240	Good	Open	Varied	Fine -5	29/1
Italy Cervinia	75	150	Good	Open	Varied	Cloud -4	2/2
Cortina	30	70	Good	Open	Varied	Sun -5	29/1
Norway Gålå	70	70	Good	Open	Varied	Fair -7	30/1
Switzerland Grims Montana	60	180	Good	Open	Varied	Cloud -1	29/1
Devo	90	170	Good	Open	Varied	Cloud -1	3/2
Grindelwald	60	105	Good	Open	Varied	Fair -2	3/2
Kilcher	90	170	Good	Open	Varied	Fair 3	3/2
Murren	100	180	Good	Open	Varied	Fine 1	30/1
Sana Fes	50	220	Good	Open	Varied	Fair -1	29/1
St Moritz	50	405	Fair	Open	Varied	Wind 6	29/1
Wengen	95	205	Good	Open	Varied	Fair -2	29/1
Zermatt	70	180	Good	Open	Varied	Fair -3	29/1
United States Aspen	100	125	Good	Open	Varied	Cloud 3	4/2
Deer Valley	135	180	Good	Open	Powder	Cloud -1	2/2

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L = lower slopes, U = upper slopes

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Grisly details of the race to save the planet

Doomed! We're All Doomed, I Tell You! That was not the subtitle of *Doomsday: What Can We Do?* (ITV, Monday night), a series of nuclear terrorism, asteroid impacts and killer viruses, but it should have been. At the frisson of imminent disaster! The thrill of the inevitable end of civilisation!

I wish I hadn't seen it, because it kept popping into my head like a novel record during *Pandemic* (BBC2, *Horizon*), an attempt to get to grips with the possibility of an outbreak of a deadly new flu virus, comparable to the epidemic of 1918. That killed between 40 and 100 million people, vastly more than the First World War.

Even serious programmes have to sell themselves, so we were spared the lurid threats. We had a near miss last year, for instance. Only the slaughter of thousands of innocent Hong Kong chickens

saved us from an epidemic which could, said Professor Robert Webster, have wiped out half the world's population.

In fact, like many programmes in this series, it was the story of a research race, and an entertaining story it was too. Scientists have been seeking preserved samples of the 1918 flu virus, in the hope that they will reveal how it got from birds to humans and why it was so lethal.

Dr Kirsty Duncan, a stylish young Canadian geographer, was organising an expedition to Svalbard, near Spitzbergen, where seven Norwegian miners died of flu in 1918. She hoped their infected soft tissue would be preserved in the permafrost. I thought geographers drew little pictures of sheep on maps rather than digging up killer viruses, but never mind.

Kirsty believes in ceremonies. She assembled a team of international flu experts and made them

march into the conference behind a Scottish pipe. Professor Webster had the temerity to question her approach, calling her something of a "mopey". He was uncomfortable with all the premature hype, such as the *Horizon* documentary crew. He had not realised that Kirsty was also a control freak. She bristled. Anyone not committed to her project should leave now, she declared.

In fact, somebody had tried this trick before. Forty-six years ago, Dr Johan Hultin of California took preserved tissue from flu victims in Alaska. He tried to revive the virus by pushing frozen samples up the noses of laboratory ferrets. Well, you would, wouldn't you? Sometimes we need to defrost our fish fingers in a hurry. "Push them up a ferret's nose," I declare. "It works every time."

Meanwhile, in California, researcher Jeffrey K. Taubenberger

REVIEW



Paul Hoggart

had discovered that the US military kept a vast archive of dead servicemen's bodily tissues preserved in wax. Wax is a more reliable storage medium for this ghastly library than, say, ferrets' noses. While Kirsty was whipping her ferrets into line, Jeffrey K. found a bit of waxed 1918 lung, complete with virus, and placed together most of its genetic code.

When his sample ran out he contacted Dr Hultin (now retired) who went back to Alaska to get some more. He didn't take any ferrets, though — just his wife's pruning shears. I guess they were the kind marketed as "also useful for exhuming diseased corpses".

Kirsty and team had arrived in Svalbard and held a lot of sensitive, meaningful and reverential ceremonies over the graves, with Kirsty presiding. They had so many masks, isolation suits and quarantine tents it looked like a scene from *E.T.* Then they got digging.

Kirsty's expedition cost £250,000. She found no usable virus samples. "The goal was to get soft tissue. We got soft tissue," she announced triumphantly. If that was all she wanted she could have tried the wastepaper basket in any doctor's waiting room. They are full of soft tissues, many impregnated with the flu virus.

Hultin's pruning expedition cost less than £2,000, and he came back with an excellent sample. This usefully proved that establishing the virus's genetic code doesn't tell you how it spreads from birds to humans, or why it is so lethal. We are still doomed!

With an audience hovering around the million mark, *Family Confidential* is Channel 5's most successful "documentary" series. It is easy to see why. Exploring the everyday lives of the nation's most feckless, dim-witted or irresponsible families has a considerable grisly fascination. It is, of course, studiously non-judgmental.

The families are pure talk-show fodder. Anglia crawl their subjects up from the same murky research pool as Trisha and Vanessa. It is a new hybrid, a talk-show or, perhaps a *Springerinterview*. Usually one family member wants to complain about the others and they all

want to be on telly. Last night, Pauline was mad with daughter Sharon, who dumps her kids on her for days to swan around on a topless kiss-o-gram. A chilly job: I hope she doesn't get flu.

Channel 5 also launched a new series of *Bring Me The Head of Light Entertainment*, the comedy panel game hosted by irritating, squeaky Graham Norton. It is a tribute to (or rip-off of) the ghastly old series called *Joker's Wild*, where club comics told lame gags in answer to questions from Barry Cryer, but using alternative stand-ups instead. Even the individual rounds all seemed lifted from other programmes.

It was not completely devoid of laughs, but most of them were only "alternative" in the sense that they were ruder than B. Manning could ever get away with on the box. Too much material, alas, felt clumsy and dead. They could try showing it up a ferret's nose.

BBC1

- 8.00am Business Breakfast (95495)
- 7.00 Breakfast News (31124)
- 9.00 Kilroy (8212785)
- 10.45 The Vanessa Show (4611360)
- 9.55 News Weather (76783124)
- 11.00 Real Forces (9793501)
- 11.25 Can't Cook, Won't Cook (76783360)
- 11.55 News Weather (76783747)
- 12.00pm Call My Shout (32673)
- 12.30 Wipeout (5861209)
- 12.55 The Weather Show (76783124)
- 1.00 One O'Clock News (76783124)
- 1.30 Regional News Weather (47148679)
- 1.40 Neighbours Sarah confronts her stalker (76783124)
- 2.05 Inside the Chief Investigates a grenade attack on two Vietnam veterans (3174495)
- 2.55 Body Spies A stress-busting plan to beat fatigue (5428785)
- 3.25 Children's BBC Playdays (6341414)
- 3.45 Spider-Man (5710118) 3.50 Smart on the Road (3376018) 4.05 Augustus (6423414)
- 4.30 L & K Friday (5114038) 4.55 Newsround Extra (1647853) 5.10 Blue Peter (5023888)
- 5.35 Neighbours (76783124)
- 6.00 Six O'Clock News Weather (76783124)
- 6.30 Regional News Magazine (768)
- 7.00 Celebrity Ready, Steady, Cook Casualty stars Claire Goose and Rebecca Lacey attempt to create a meal against the clock (76783124)
- 7.30 Top of the Pops The week's chart-toppers, featuring the UK's number one single (76783124)
- 8.00 Vets In Practice Keith and Fiona prepare to depart to different destinations (10710) (76783124)
- 8.30 A Question of Sport Martin Johnson, Johnny Herbert, Steve Smith and Neil Quinn take part in the quick-fire sports quiz, with team captains Ally McCoist and John Flannery (76783124)
- 9.00 Nine O'Clock News Regional News Weather (76783124)
- 9.30 Parkinson Guests include Michael Caine and Harry Enfield (76783124)
- 10.22 Comic Relief: The Launch Preview of the fundraising event (76783124)



Jean-Claude Van Damme paid to come off hunters (10.25pm)

- 10.25 Hard Target (1993) Violent thriller, starring Jean-Claude Van Damme as a sailor investigating a group of sadistic hunters specialising in human quarry. Directed by John Woo (76783124)
- 11.55 The Stand-Up Show (308065)
- 12.55 The Unholy (1996) A deranged scientist manages to send a woman 1,000 years back in time, where she attempts to alter her destiny. Horror, starring Pamela Duncan and Bill Dauterive. Directed by Roger Corman (76783124)
- 2.05 Weather (5859362)
- 2.10 BBC News 24 (54085506)

BBC2

- 7.00am Children's BBC Breakfast Show: Hairy Jeremy (3479834) 7.05 Teletubbies (3697476) 7.30 Secret Superhero and Co (8176143) 7.55 Short Circuit (6722766) 8.15 Revind (6326933) 8.20 Taz-Mania (7288) 8.40 Polka Dot Shirts (3247872) 8.50 Johnson and Friends (3240356) 9.00 Storytime (2962619) 9.10 See You, See Me (4047496) 9.30 Numberline (1159414) 9.45 Come Outside (1159498) 10.00 Teletubbies (3697476) 10.30 Mopatop's Shop (76783124) 10.50 Look and Read (76783124) 11.10 Landmarks (2968533) 11.30 English File (9679) 12.00pm Scene (32555) 12.30 Working Lunch (42679) 1.00 Johnson and Friends (9482507)
- 1.10 The Travel Hour (9155583)
- 2.10 Sporting Greats (61202872)
- 2.40 News Weather (76783124)
- 2.45 Match of the Day With Malcolm Allison (515) (76783124)
- 3.25 News Weather (76783124)
- 3.50 Turning Points (2214105)
- 3.55 The Natural World The spotted hyena (76783124)
- 4.25 Breathing Lessons (1993) An ageing couple's marriage is threatened by their contrasting views on life. With James Garner and Joanne Woodward. Directed by John Erman (76783124)
- 6.00 The Simpsons (76783124)
- 6.20 The Simpsons (76783124)
- 6.45 Robot Wars Philpott Forster presents motorised mayhem (76783124)
- 7.15 Electric Circus News and gossip from the world of entertainment (76783124)
- 7.30 CRIME Country House Lord and Lady Tavisford are forced to make some decisions (76783124)
- 8.00 Gardening from Scratch Helen Yerm helps to transform an old coal bunker into an attractive garden feature (76783124)
- 8.30 CRIME Garden Stories The team visit a retired lawyer's ultra-modern plot (76783124)



Tom (James Dreyfus) strikes it lucky with Nino (Charlie Condou) (9pm)

- 9.00 Gimme Gimme Gimme Tom has a night of passion with an Italian he meets in a pub (76783124)
- 9.30 Bang, Bang, It's Reeves and Mortimer Lee Dennis makes his debut on stage at Baron's nightclub (8/6) (76783124)
- 10.00 The Young Ones Mr Balowski becomes a mad axeman (76783124)
- 10.30 Newswatch (76783124)
- 11.15 The Outer Limits Aliens plot to destroy Earth (76783124)
- 12.00am Edith and Marcel (1983) Musical biopic, charting the relationship between the singer Edith Piaf and the boxing champion Marcel Cerdan. Evelyn Boux and Marcel Cerdan Jr star. Directed by Claude Lelouch (76783124)
- 2.35 Weather (5859362)
- 3.00 BBC Learning Zone: GCSE Bitesize Revision: English 3 (94254) 5.00 Cose

ITV

- 5.30am ITN Morning News (31785)
- 6.00 GMTV (5666788)
- 9.25 Triha (7672211)
- 10.30 This Morning (76783124)
- 12.15pm ITN News (76783124)
- 12.30 ITN Lunchtime News (310105)
- 12.59 ITN Crimestoppers (48411678)
- 1.00 WEST: Shortland Street Marnie hides her heartbreak (36679)
- 1.00 WALES: Wish You Were Here? Visits to Cuba, the Dominions and Palma de Mallorca (76783124)
- 1.30 Home and Away Robert's plan is working (76783124)
- 2.00 The Jerry Springer Show (76783124)
- 2.45 Dale's Supermarket Sweep The shopping quiz (76783124)
- 3.15 ITN News Headlines (76783124)
- 3.20 ITN News (9606835)
- 3.25 CITV: Mopatop's Shop (6351768) 3.35 Timbuctoo (2232320) 3.40 Animal Stories (2221485) 3.50 Adam's Family Tree (502650) 4.15 Gladiators Train 2 Win (158501) 4.45 Comin' Acha (5137259)
- 5.10 A Country Practice Tom finds Eam (9445679)
- 5.40 ITN Early Evening News (779785)
- 6.00 Home and Away (76783124)
- 6.25 WALES: Wales Tonight (76783124)
- 6.25 WEST: HTV Weather (343650)
- 6.30 WEST: The West Tonight (76783124)
- 6.30 Bruce Forsyth's Play Your Cards Right Popular game show (76783124)
- 7.30 Coronation Street Kevin and Sally prepare for a showdown (76783124)
- 8.00 Airline The day of Katrina's wedding arrives (5/8) (76783124)
- 8.30 Neighbours from Hell Insight into life on the Cornhill estate on the outskirts of Glasgow (76783124)



Dean, who has wallpapered his kitchen using fire samples (9pm)

- 9.00 CRIME Britain's Worst DIYers Sochers and bidders own up to their domestic disasters (76783124)
- 10.00 News at Ten: Weather (76783124)
- 10.30 HTV News and Weather (76783124)
- 10.45 All the Right Moves (1993) An eager high-school football player clashes with his ambitious coach. Drama, starring Tom Cruise and Craig T. Nelson. Michael Chapman directs (80382501)
- 12.30am Pirate TV: Off to adventure sports (11/7) (37807)
- 1.00 State of Emergency (1994) Joe Mangione stars in this drama as a stressed-out doctor battling against time, the authorities and cutbacks to save patients in his emergency department. Directed by Lasker Linka Glazer (912457)
- 2.35 The Haunted Flatmate (76783124)
- 3.05 Baywatch (76783124)
- 3.55 Trisha Show earlier (76783124)
- 4.55 ITN Nightscreen (86193815)
- 5.00 Coronation Street (76783124)

CENTRAL

- As HTV West except: 12.20pm-12.30 Central News: Weather (76783124) 1.00 Wish You Were Here? (76783124) 1.30 The Jerry Springer Show (76783124) 2.15-2.45 Home and Away (76783124) 3.20-3.25 Central News: Weather (76783124) 3.25-3.30 Shortland Street (76783124) 3.30-3.35 Central News: Weather (76783124) 3.35-3.40 FILM: Sweeney (9412334) 12.00am FILM: The Dunwich Horror (95457) 2.15 Box Office America (47544) 2.45 SeaQuest 2002 (76783124) 3.35 The Haunted Flatmate (76783124) 4.05 Central Jobfinder '99 (76783124) 5.00-5.30 Asian Eye (76783124)
- 12.20pm-12.30 Central News: Weather (76783124) 1.00 Wish You Were Here? (76783124) 1.30 The Jerry Springer Show (76783124) 2.15-2.45 Home and Away (76783124) 3.20-3.25 Central News: Weather (76783124) 3.25-3.30 Shortland Street (76783124) 3.30-3.35 Central News: Weather (76783124) 3.35-3.40 FILM: Sweeney (9412334) 12.00am FILM: The Dunwich Horror (95457) 2.15 Box Office America (47544) 2.45 SeaQuest 2002 (76783124) 3.35 The Haunted Flatmate (76783124) 4.05 Central Jobfinder '99 (76783124) 5.00-5.30 Asian Eye (76783124)

WESTCOUNTRY

- As HTV West except: 12.15pm-12.27 HTV News: Weather (76783124) 12.27-12.30 Illuminations (76783124) 1.00 The Jerry Springer Show (76783124) 2.15-2.45 Home and Away (76783124) 3.20-3.25 Central News: Weather (76783124) 3.25-3.30 Shortland Street (76783124) 3.30-3.35 Central News: Weather (76783124) 3.35-3.40 FILM: Sweeney (9412334) 12.00am FILM: The Dunwich Horror (95457) 2.15 Box Office America (47544) 2.45 SeaQuest 2002 (76783124) 3.35 The Haunted Flatmate (76783124) 4.05 Central Jobfinder '99 (76783124) 5.00-5.30 Asian Eye (76783124)

MERIDIAN

- As HTV West except: 12.15pm-12.30 Meridian News (76783124) 1.00-1.30 Home and Away (76783124) 1.30-1.35 Meridian Tonight (76783124) 1.35-1.40 Meridian News: Weather (76783124) 1.40-1.45 Meridian Tonight (76783124) 1.45-1.50 Meridian News: Weather (76783124) 1.50-1.55 Meridian Tonight (76783124) 1.55-2.00 Meridian News: Weather (76783124) 2.00-2.05 Meridian Tonight (76783124) 2.05-2.10 Meridian News: Weather (76783124) 2.10-2.15 Meridian Tonight (76783124) 2.15-2.20 Meridian News: Weather (76783124) 2.20-2.25 Meridian Tonight (76783124) 2.25-2.30 Meridian News: Weather (76783124) 2.30-2.35 Meridian Tonight (76783124) 2.35-2.40 Meridian News: Weather (76783124) 2.40-2.45 Meridian Tonight (76783124) 2.45-2.50 Meridian News: Weather (76783124) 2.50-2.55 Meridian Tonight (76783124) 2.55-3.00 Meridian News: Weather (76783124) 3.00-3.05 Meridian Tonight (76783124) 3.05-3.10 Meridian News: Weather (76783124) 3.10-3.15 Meridian Tonight (76783124) 3.15-3.20 Meridian News: Weather (76783124) 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CRICKET 45

India trapped
as Saqlain
spins his web

SPORT

GERALD DAVIES 49

English disdain
serves to rub
salt in old wounds



Davies takes pivotal role for England

BY MATT DICKINSON

GEOFF THOMPSON, the chairman of the Football Association, is due to leave the country for a month-long break shortly, but the search for the next England manager will move on apace. The man pulling the strings, as he has been doing all week, will be David Davies.

Since his appointment as acting chief executive after the removal of Graham Kelly at Lancaster Gate, Davies has grown from being the FA's senior press officer to the most powerful administrator in the English game.

It was he, with Thompson, who brought together the men who would decide on Hoddle's dismissal and it will be Davies who will co-ordinate the appointment of the successor. It is a long way from his former incarnation as a BBC journalist.

Next Thursday, after the England match against France at Wembley, Davies is expected to meet the FA's international committee and a group of four or five councillors will be empowered to lead the search. David Sheepshanks, the chairman of Ipswich Town, David Dein, the vice-chairman of Arsenal, and Noel White, who chairs the international committee, will hope, and expect, to be charged with the job.

Bizarrely, Howard Wilkinson, the FA's technical director, who is standing in as caretaker coach of the national team, is also expected to have a prominent role, even though he is having serious thoughts as to whether he wants the job himself. Many at the FA expect Wilkinson to stay in the post at least until June and results in the interim could turn him into the main contender.

Yet it is not only Wilkinson who is on trial, but Davies's job to ensure that the search is an efficient one and the success of that operation may go a long way to determining whether he is appointed



Laslandes: starts match

chief executive on a permanent basis or whether he chooses to pursue his political ambitions.

Putting together the mechanism is likely to prove far easier than finding the coach. Having turned down the chance to manage France, Arsène Wenger is not going to opt for England, while senior Manchester United figures acted yesterday to stifle talk of Alex Ferguson, who will be re-evaluating his contract this summer.

The Old Trafford board believes that it can satisfy Ferguson's wage demands with the

promise of a testimonial match and the seemingly imminent appointment of an assistant would suggest that the United manager is content to limit himself to club level. Steve McClaren, the first-team coach at Derby County, has emerged as Ferguson's choice, and talks will begin today about a move to Old Trafford.

The only outstanding coach who is presently out of work is Terry Venables, who received the backing of Bryan Robson, the Middlesbrough manager, yesterday. "With Terry available, there is no way the FA should be looking at foreign coaches," Robson said, but Venables would appear to have too many influential enemies.

Given the difficulty facing the FA, Thompson is probably glad to be leaving the decision to his colleagues as to who should replace Hoddle. "Glenn had lost the general support of the country and he had also lost support on the international committee," Thompson said yesterday. "Glenn made a bad error of judgment and he accepts that now. I respect him for that. When in public life, it is important that people consider what they say on matters of such sensitivity."

"Whoever gets the job needs to understand all aspects of the game. They must have qualities of leadership and vision and the ability to listen to other people. We want the best man for the job, we don't want to rush into anything, but, as far as I am concerned, the quicker the better."

For now, though, it is Wilkinson who must lead his country against a France squad that will include five England-based players in Deshaun, and Leboeuf, from Chelsea, and Petit, Vieira and Anelka, of Arsenal. Zinedine Zidane, the World Player of the Year, was also among the 18 names announced yesterday, while Roger Lemerre, the France coach, has already confirmed that Lilian Laslandes, the joint-top goalscorer in the French league for Bordeaux, will start the match next Wednesday.

Asked if England would be affected by Hoddle's dismissal, Lemerre said yesterday: "The English will always be the English. For them, the truth is on the pitch and not outside. Their combative remains a great strength. They always bounce back."

"It is easy to scoff at English football for being one-dimensional and to be condescending about it. That is an insult to all the English have done for football. The long balls, clearances and crosses for headers are just a caricature."

"Our challenge is to win at the Wembley temple. My players were world champions, so why can't they be the first French team to beat the English at their lucky stadium?"

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 5 1999

New York beckons unsung British boxer



Clarke sells leather to augment his boxing earnings and some worry that he might get tamed by the impressive Vargas on his New York adventure

HOWARD CLARKE, an eight-round journeyman from Warley, could barely believe his luck when he found himself on the New Year's Honours List for services to boxing. Not the honours list that comes from Downing Street, or those high-sounding government offices in Whitehall, but the one that is issued by the home of boxing itself, Madison Square Garden.

Clarke has been chosen to meet Fernando Vargas in the latter's first defence of his International Boxing Federation (IBF) light-middleweight championship, a contest that is on the undercard of the Lennox Lewis v Evander Holyfield world heavyweight championship bout in New York on March 13.

Clarke, 31, thought that there was some mistake

when Pat Cowdell, his manager, broke the news. After all, for most of his career, which started in 1991, he had not been called upon to journey too far from Dudley, where he works in Leather World. In 1998, he did box in Hammarskjöld, South Africa, and Tenerife, but until then the farthest he had travelled was to Cardiff.

Boxing against Vargas at the Garden is the equivalent of Rushden and Diamonds playing at Wembley in the FA Cup Final. "It was just after Christmas that Pat called me," Clarke said. "I hadn't seen him for six months. He said: 'I've got a fight for you. Do you want it?' I said: 'Well, I don't know. OK, I'll take it. Where is it?' He said: 'Sit down, Madison Square Garden. Against Fernando Vargas. I thought it was a wind-up, but Pat kept saying it wasn't'."

Clarke had been picked out of the IBF rankings because of the British interest in the main event, but he was not certain how he reached the rankings without even challenging for a British area title and having suffered ten defeats in his 37 contests.

Clearly, though, it was on the strength of his win over Jason Papillion, of Louisiana, on the Carl Thompson v Chris Eubank card at Sheffield last July, Papillion had been in the IBF top 15. "I was all over him, beat him out of sight," Clarke said. The £500-a-night, have-bag-and-boots-will-travel fighter is reported to be receiving around £30,000 for the New York bout. But for him, the money is secondary. "I felt honoured that I was given the chance not only to fight at Madison Square Garden but on the undercard of

Clarke relishes place at the Garden party

BY SRIKUMAR SEN
BOXING CORRESPONDENT

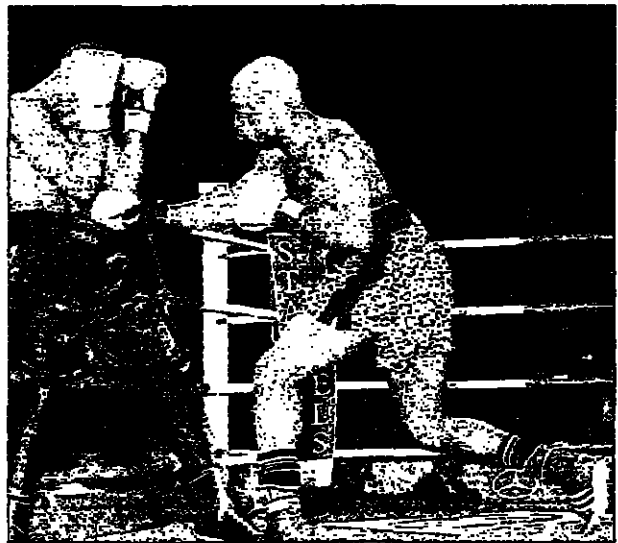
such a great heavyweight fight. That meant more to me than the money. Although I don't know what I'll be getting anyway, because I haven't seen the contract yet."

Not unlike those receiving honours from the Queen, Clarke had been told by Cowdell to keep the news to himself — but the boxer just had to tell someone. "How could I keep such a thing secret? I told my mum and dad and after that, of course, everyone knew. But I deserve it. After all, I beat a ranked fighter. I know I have to stay out of the pub and I've been out running in Warley Woods every day since I heard."

"You know, the day Pat called me, it was my wife Susan's birthday. She's my rock. We've been married 11 years and we have five kids. I said to her: 'What do you want for your birthday?' And she said: 'Bring me back the IBF belt.' Yes, Vargas is a good fighter, but I'm a better one."

Let us hope everything in the Garden stays rosy for Clarke. Some experts are saying that he should not be allowed to take on Vargas. They are concerned about the discrepancy in the abilities of the two men, on paper and on canvas. The American, 21, is an exceptional boxer. All 15 of his bouts have ended inside the distance. Others believe that Clarke does not risk serious injury because the bout will be over quickly.

John Morris, the secretary of the British Boxing Board of Control, said of Clarke: "He's a tough and professional fighter," but he added that the board would be considering whether the match was a suitable one before deciding whether to let him make the trip to New York.



Clarke connects with a right during his win over Papillion, which opened the Garden gate

Doping policy left stagnant

The much-heralded world conference on doping ended in fudged disarray here yesterday — becoming another missed opportunity to impose a severe anti-drugs policy.

The use of drugs in international sport has been widespread since the early Sixties. Every time that there has been a high-profile incident, such as the death of Tommy Simpson, the British cyclist, in the 1967 Tour de France, or the positive finding on Ben Johnson, the Canada sprinter, at the 1988 Olympic Games, we have been told by the authorities that it was a "watershed" and things had to change.

They have not. This conference was called after the scandal of the 1998 Tour de France, when performance-enhancing substances were found in the equipment of teams and their officials. The final declaration yesterday by the conference, sponsored by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and attended by sports federations, scientists and governments, was simply anodyne.

A conference that had a chance to help eradicate drugs in sport failed. John Goodbody reports

It lays down a minimum sanction for significant doping substances of two years for a first offence. However, the declaration allows for a possible modification of the two-year sanction because the sports of both football and cycling believe that they cannot impose such harsh restrictions.

Tony Banks, the Minister for Sport, described the sanctions as both "minimalist and permissive". Eleven years ago, in this city, the General Assembly of International Sports Federations also agreed to a minimum two-year ban, although this agreement has never subsequently been carried out in several sports — because, over the past 11 years, competitors, particularly wealthy ones, in

"The IOC could have taken action years ago"

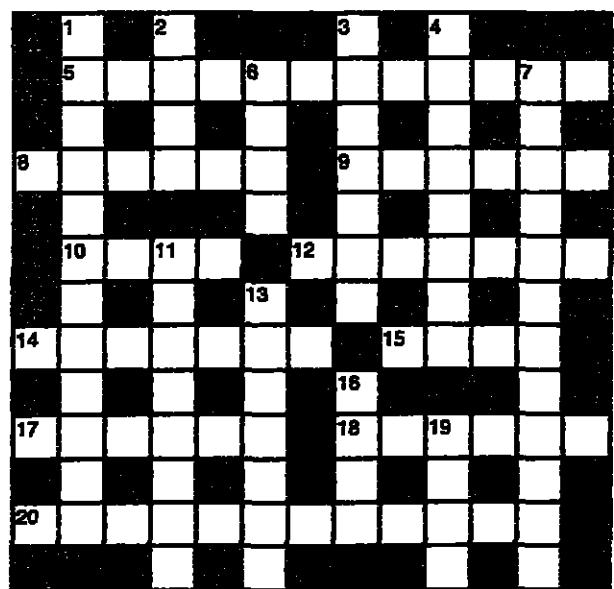
of discussions will take place to settle the membership and targets of the agency.

Banks said that having invited governments that contribute, collectively, far more than the IOC to the fight against drugs to the conference, it cannot exclude them from the agency. He added: "I say that in all friendliness because these issues are bigger than the IOC and at times it might come as a surprise to the IOC that there are things bigger than the IOC."

If the Olympic movement had wanted sole responsibility, it could have acted years ago. It was urged to act then, but he argued that it was only responsible for drug testing during the games.

Nor are governments blameless. In Great Britain, the Conservative Government repeatedly reneged on a promise made in September 1978 that the possession of hormone drugs, without a medical prescription, would become a criminal offence. The Labour Government now has an opportunity to join with a handful of countries which have already enacted such legislation.

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD



No 1633

ACROSS

- 5 Careless with large (not small) sums (5-7)
8 Drive, thrust (6)
9 (Am. Ind.) ceremony: conference (6)
10 Rounded projection (4)
12 Capital of Sri Lanka (7)
14 (Jub.) opening (7)
15 Muddle: fellow-diners (4)
17 Computer trespasser (6)
18 Burning (with zeal, love) (6)
20 Firework display (12)

DOWN

- 1 Star group as eg Andromeda (6,6)
2 Leap (4)
3 One for orator to stand on (7)
4 Whale's nostril (8)
6 Toy figure (4)
7 Entertainment industry (4,8)
11 He summons Commons to Lords (5,3)
13 Marked (for life) (7)
16 Hit party (slang) (4)
19 Fall in drops (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 1632

- ACROSS: 1 Two's company 8 Lethe 9 Capable 10 Haft
11 Runabout 13 Cutler 14 People 17 Absolved 19 Jamb
23 Bouquet 23 Dregs 24 Beyond a joke
DOWN: 1 Tilt 2 Out of it 3 Chew 4 Mock-up 5 Alphabet
6 Yobbo 7 Nettle 12 Jealousy 13 Crabbe 15 Placebo
16 Fenton 18 Squib 20 Baste 21 Idea

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